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COMMENTARY

Khrushchev's Visit: The German Problem Remains — G. F. HUDSON

The Dangers of Literacy — DAVID DAICHES

The "Affluent" Kibbutzim — GERDA L. COHEN

Yom Kippur and the Jew of Today — DAVID BAUMGARDT

Greenwich Village Challenges Tammany — DAN WAKEFIELD

Freedom, Virtue, and the New Scholasticism — DAVID SPITZ

A Group of Poems — LEONARD WOLF

Social Revolution in Cuba — HAROLD LAVINE

Mrs. Benson—A Story — JAMES PURDY

An English Girl Finds Palestine — ANN ROELOFS

Spirit of Rabbi Nachman—A Poem — HARVEY SHAPIRO

From the American Scene
Make Mine Manhattan — GERALD WEALES

Cedars of Lebanon
Jochébed Mourns for Moses

BOOKS IN REVIEW

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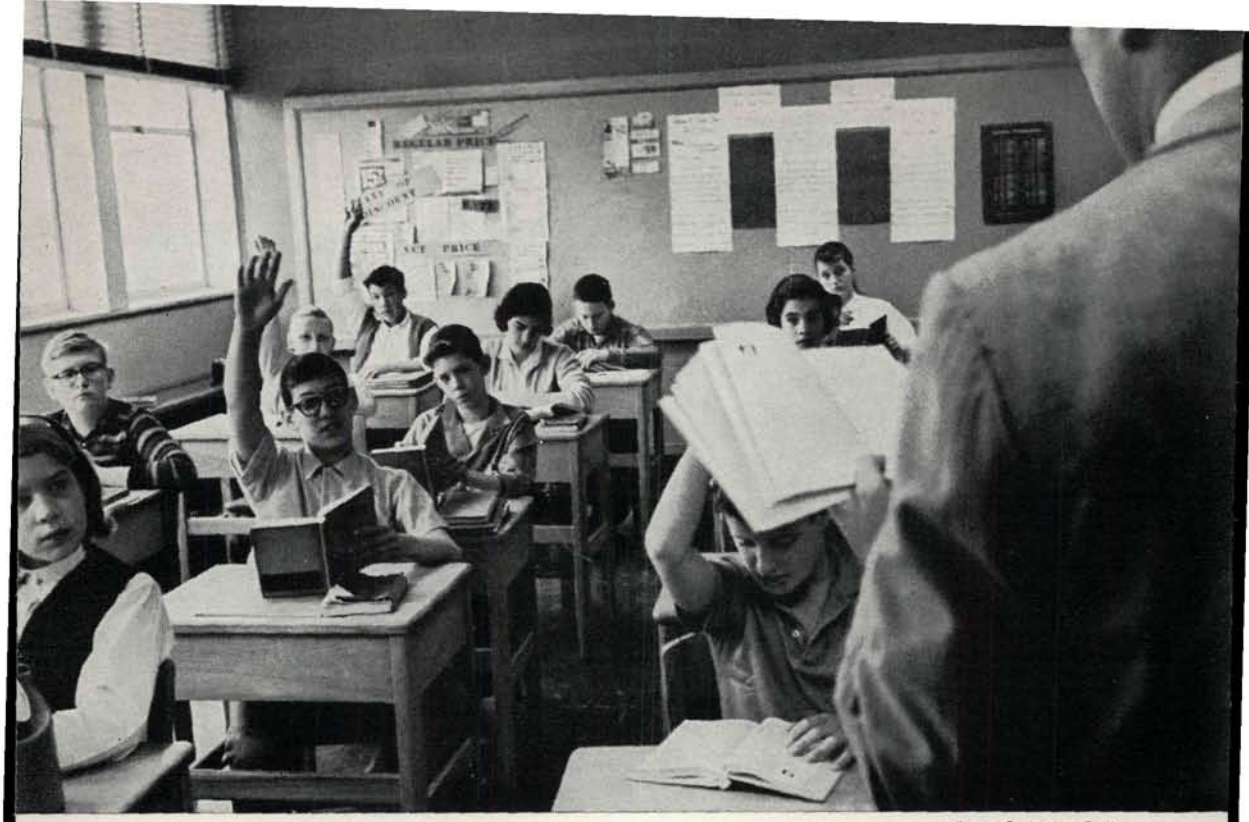

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COMMENTARY

KHRUSHCHEV'S VISIT: THE GERMAN PROBLEM REMAINS

Possibilities for a Settlement

G. F. HUDSON

IN A letter to Dr. Konrad Adenauer some time before his own trip to the United States, Premier Khrushchev warned the Federal German Chancellor against "fanning of passions and preparation for conflict" and declared that in his meetings with President Eisenhower "we naturally cannot limit our talks to the question of corn or cucumbers. We shall discuss political questions, state affairs, and unsolved problems. And the main unsolved problem is the elimination of the last traces of the Second World War, without which it is difficult to consolidate peace and the security of nations."

These words, which Khrushchev was quick to repeat on his arrival in the United States, were certainly intended to make Adenauer feel uneasy. There was a definite suggestion that Khrushchev and Eisenhower, as the leaders of the two world superpowers, were going to settle the affairs of Central Europe in secret negotiations, without regard to the views or rights of the West German government. To reassure Adenauer that this was not his intention was the main reason Eisenhower made Bonn the first stopping place on his European tour. Needless to say, Eisenhower's pledge not to negotiate an agreement with the Soviet Union behind the back of the West Germans greatly disappointed those circles in the United States and in Britain whose idea of a settlement between the Soviet Union and the West is essentially of one at Germany's expense; one leading British newspaper even expressed the hope that Eisenhower would not take "too literally" any promises to his allies which might restrict his freedom of action.

Nevertheless, Eisenhower's conversations with Khrushchev were in fact negotiations, even though they were officially only "exploratory," and the meetings of the two men on American soil were in reality a bilateral summit conference; this is universally assumed both by those who wish to make sure that Eisenhower does not bargain away any of the interests of his allies, and by those who would like to give him a free hand on behalf of the whole Western coalition.

Certainly Eisenhower and Khrushchev did not confine their talks to corn and cucumbers. But when Khrushchev said that he was mainly interested in discussing "the

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elimination of the last traces of the Second World War," what should he be taken to mean? Is this a mere empty phrase or does it hold the key to the attitude and purpose of Khrushchev in his direct negotiations with the President of the United States? What, precisely, are the "last traces of the Second World War"? In trying to estimate the chances of progress toward a general settlement through the Khrushchev-Eisenhower talks, it is worth while to begin with a retrospect across the years to the brief moment when Hitler's Third Reich bestrode the continent of Europe from the Bay of Biscay to the Volga.

Hitler very nearly won the Second World War. Even without winning it, he achieved a degree of integration of Europe under central control comparable to that accomplished by Napoleon. Like Napoleon, Hitler failed to subdue either Britain or Russia, but in contrast to the Napoleonic period the defeat of Hitler could not be brought about by any purely European coalition; it needed the intervention of the United States, both through its own strategic operations and through lend-lease to its allies, to drive Germany to unconditional surrender.

From the end of 1941, the United States took part directly for the second time within three decades in a great European war; the question was whether it would again this time revert to its traditional isolation, as after 1918. Had American policy in 1945-47 followed the isolationist precedent of 1918-20, the immediate consequences in Europe would have been quite different from what they were on the previous occasion. After the collapse of Hohenzollern Germany, Europe was left without any power that could aspire to a continental hegemony, for France was too exhausted and Russia too much weakened and disorganized by revolution and civil war. Until the military power of Germany was re-created by Hitler, therefore, the political and strategic disengagement of the United States from Europe did not involve any prospect of the unification of Europe by a single imperial power; the danger lay, rather, in the increased territorial fragmentation and political disunity of the Continent, which were later to render it so vulnerable to the Nazi bid for supremacy.

But in 1945 it was clear to any open-eyed observer that the total elimination of German power, with Russian troops in Warsaw, Berlin, Budapest, and Vienna, must mean a decisive Russian preponderance in Europe unless a balance of power were to be maintained by a continuing American "presence" on the Continent. The question was whether American foreign policy in the postwar years would provide this. In 1945 it was very far from being certain that it would; the indications indeed pointed toward a reversion to isolationism qualified by American participation in a veto-bound United Nations.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT not only failed to comprehend the nature and purposes of the Soviet Communist regime; he also, from his own past experience, took a pessimistic view of the future willingness of Congress to permit American involvement in European affairs after the overthrow of Hitler. At Yalta, he told Stalin he was afraid Congress would not allow American troops to be stationed in Europe for the occupation of Germany for more than two years after the end of the war. This information was by way of apology for an anticipated American failure to carry a fair share of the burden of Allied postwar occupation in Germany.

To Stalin, however, Roosevelt's words must have been sweet music on the ear, for these American forces would be the one really serious obstacles to that supreme power over Europe which he already saw within his grasp. If he had only two years to wait, he could be confident that within that time he would have so organized control of Eastern Europe that the extension of Communist power to the Atlantic would be a matter of no great difficulty. That his original project of domination covered Western as well as Eastern Europe was curiously disclosed in his correspondence with Tito at the time of the Yugoslav-Soviet break in

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1948. Reproaching Tito for arrogance in claiming for his Yugoslav partisans sole credit for the liberation of his country, Stalin wrote: "the Soviet army came to the aid of the Yugoslav people, crushed the German invader, liberated Belgrade and in this way created the conditions which were necessary for the Communist party of Yugoslavia to achieve power. Unfortunately the Soviet army did not and could not render such assistance to the French and Italian Communist parties."

This is a clear statement—made in a communication between two Communist parties not intended for publication—that Stalin would, if he could, have installed "people's democracies" in France and Italy just as he did in Poland, Rumania, or Hungary. What prevented him was simply the fact that in the course of the war Europe west of the Elbe and the Adriatic was overrun, not by Russian, but by American and British troops. But, as far as the American troops were concerned, this barrier could be expected (from President Roosevelt's own forecast) to disappear long before Western Europe would have recovered economic and political stability.

If the American forces had been withdrawn from Germany before the end of 1947, there would no longer have been any nation in Europe capable of standing up to the pressure of Soviet power. The Soviet Union emerged from the war far stronger than Britain—an outcome which Churchill, preoccupied with the annihilation of Germany, anticipated too little and too late. So Stalin waited for the American withdrawal from Europe, and meanwhile prepared for the satellization of Germany by extending the political activity of the "Socialist Unity party" into the Western occupation zones and pressing diplomatically for the "international control of the Ruhr," which was to be the base for Soviet penetration into the economy of Western Europe.

It is unnecessary to add that the outcome for which Stalin waited is not what actually happened. American troops were not withdrawn from Germany; Russian demands for participation in control of the Ruhr were rejected; the Communists were not allowed to build up their power in the Western occupation zones. The United States and Britain combined to oppose further Soviet expansion in Europe, and the United States intervened to revive Europe economically through the Marshall Plan. Stalin succeeded in consolidating his Eastern bloc of satellite states by means of the *coup d'état* in Czechoslovakia in February 1948, but his attempt to drive the Western powers from Berlin by blockade was thwarted by the American-British airlift. The sequel to this bitter contest was the formation of the North Atlantic Alliance committing the United States, as it had never in peacetime been committed before, to a responsibility for armed assistance to a group of European nations in the event of attack on any one of them.

From a Communist point of view, something went wrong in the period just after the war; essentially it was that the Americans, instead of getting out of Europe, as was expected even by their own President at the beginning of 1945, obstinately stayed there. How to get the Americans out of Europe has therefore been the cardinal problem of Soviet foreign policy ever since. Basically there were two possible ways of achieving it, which were alternative, though not entirely incompatible. The one was to turn European peoples against America: to represent Marshall aid and NATO as devices of Wall Street imperialism to enslave Europe, to encourage neutralist and anti-American sentiments in every European country, and to carry on political campaigns against American bases in Europe; it was as part of this agitation that French Communists used to paint walls in seaport towns with the slogan "Americans Go America." The alternative method was to start at the other end, to turn the American people against Europe: to persuade them that it was not worth their while to assume obligations to protect European nations and that they could have lasting peace with the Soviet Union if only they would cease to sup-

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port the anti-Soviet intrigues of reactionary European governments.

From the time of President Truman's first moves to contain Soviet expansion in Europe to the arrival last spring of Soviet Deputy Premier Anastas Mikoyan on American soil, it was the anti-American line in Europe that had priority in Soviet political propaganda; the enemy was American imperialism and the American "instigators of war." But it was only to be expected that sooner or later, if Moscow failed to turn Europe against America, it would have a try at turning America against Europe. When Khrushchev finally decided on a direct political approach to the United States, he did not wait for an invitation; Mikoyan arrived uninvited, ostensibly to pay a call on the Soviet Ambassador in Washington, but, having arrived, he was treated as an official guest and given the maximum of publicity for his propaganda tour. This promising start was followed up with the Kozlov-Nixon exchange and led on to the agreement for an exchange of state visits at the summit, with direct conversations between the President of the United States and the man who now combines, as Stalin formerly did, the offices of First Secretary of the Soviet Communist party and Prime Minister of the Soviet government.

The Soviet drive for a bilateral superpower summit conference, which was not to discuss corn and cucumbers, but to "eliminate the last traces of the Second World War," was accompanied by a switch of worldwide Communist propaganda from an anti-American, to an anti-German, line. No longer during the last year have Wall Street and the Pentagon been plotting war against the Soviet Union with Adenauer as their puppet; the West German government itself has emerged as the villain of the piece, controlled by ex-Nazis and militarists, dreaming of revenge for the defeat of 1945, and striving to set an unsuspecting America against an innocent Russia. At the very least, Adenauer is represented as a stubborn old man whose "rigidity" is the great obstacle to the peace which could otherwise quite easily be secured. This propaganda has had a striking degree of success in Britain, where it has not been difficult to revive wartime anti-German feelings and stimulate fears of German rearmament. It appears also to have had a measure of success in America.

It was in this context that the idea of "the elimination of the last traces of the Second World War" was introduced, together with the Soviet demand for a peace treaty to be concluded with the two German states without waiting for their reunification. It is essentially an attempt to get back politically to the international setting of 1945. Russia's greatest diplomatic victories were at the Yalta and Potsdam conferences, when America and Britain were the allies of the Kremlin against Germany; since then a democratic West Germany has become a member of NATO, while a Communist dictatorship in East Germany has been sustained solely by the presence of Soviet troops. Today Russia seeks to remind America and Britain that Germany is a defeated enemy with whom a peace treaty still has to be made, and tries to persuade her former allies that German affairs should be settled by a conclave of the victors, as they were at Potsdam fourteen years ago. To loosen, and finally to break, the ties binding the German Federal Republic to the Western coalition by pressing America and Britain to make concessions at Germany's expense is now the principal objective of Soviet diplomacy.

To get back to 1945, however, may not be so easy for Khrushchev, for many things have happened to condition American thinking about international affairs since Roosevelt told Bullitt that "I just have a hunch that Stalin doesn't want anything but security for his country." Eisenhower received Khrushchev in Washington under the shadow of the Soviet Russian threat to terminate unilaterally existing agreements with regard to Berlin unless the West gave way to Soviet demands. By implication, this was a threat of war, for the Soviet separate peace treaty with East Germany, which was to be concluded if the West did

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not agree to Soviet terms for a peace treaty with both German states, was to place all communications with West Berlin under the jurisdiction of the East German government, which Russia had promised to protect by force of arms against any Western use of force to keep the supply routes open. Khrushchev came to America, therefore, as a man who had threatened his host with war if he did not get what he wanted. He came, nevertheless, as a man of peace, whose one aim was to relax international tension and build up friendship between America and Russia; nothing would distress him more than to have to translate his threat into action. (It is, indeed, the characteristic technique of totalitarian political action to cover its fundamental violence with the most extravagant expressions of the desire for peaceful solutions.)

Fortunately, President Eisenhower did not allow the mood of generous hospitality appropriate to the reception of an official guest (who, to flatter his vanity, was received as a head of state, although by the constitution of his own country he is not one) to divert his mind entirely from the fact that his guest was trying to blackmail him. On his television broadcast to the American people on September 10, the President declared unequivocally that "any agreement to hold a summit meeting must be based on the certainty that our status and rights in Berlin will be respected." These words, if they meant anything, meant that Eisenhower would not negotiate under duress, and that the condition of any progress toward a settlement must be an undertaking by Khrushchev that the status quo in Berlin will not be altered by any unilateral action on the Soviet side.

This was the most fundamental issue of the conversations, and doubtless came up right at the start. Khrushchev was bound to do all he could to extract concessions as a price of allowing the Western powers to remain in West Berlin, for his indirect threat of a new and more formidable blockade has been his main lever to force the Western powers to enter into summit negotiations, from which he hopes to make big diplomatic gains because of the craving of the Western peoples for relief from the aggravation of international tension. Khrushchev must have a crisis, or the threat of one, to make a summit conference urgent and compel the Western governments to take part in it without preparatory agreements negotiated through diplomats or meetings of Foreign Ministers.

The interest of the Western governments is to work up to the summit through normal diplomatic processes, because in negotiations conducted by professionals without a time limit, progress can only be made through give-and-take bargaining and there can be no agreements unless the Soviet Union has something to offer. Khrushchev, on the other hand, has persistently avoided such a procedure because he has had no intention of making any real concessions in return for the gains he seeks, except only a temporary release from the imminent danger of war. He has therefore tried to create an atmosphere of menace, so that any agreement reached at an enforced meeting of heads of government will appear to public opinion in the Western democracies as a victory for peace, no matter how disadvantageous its terms may be.

Last year Khrushchev used the crisis in the Middle East as an occasion for demanding an immediate summit conference, and his failure to get it then was due more to the objections of China than to the unwillingness of the Western powers. With his ultimatum over Berlin last November Khrushchev deliberately provoked a crisis which made high-level negotiations a matter of urgency, but the Western powers were able to obtain a Foreign Ministers' conference as the precondition of a summit. When the Foreign Ministers' negotiations reached a deadlock, as they were bound to do in view of Gromyko's attitude, the West was faced with the alternative of either remaining in the diplomatic deadlock, with a most dangerous situation developing in Germany, or proceeding to a summit conference with-

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out any of the previous progress toward a solution on which its statesmen had said they would insist. The Eisenhower-Khrushchev meeting was a way out of this dilemma, in that it provided for discussions at the highest level, and yet formally was still only preparatory, since the taking of decisions was reserved for the full four-power conference. This plan also had the advantage from the Western point of view that it gave Britain time to hold a general election, which was in any case due within a short time, and to obtain a government with a fresh mandate from the electorate before having to take the strain of a critical summit meeting.

To Khrushchev, the meeting was acceptable, first because his personal prestige would be enhanced by a state visit to America, and secondly, because he undoubtedly had enough confidence in his own personality to believe that he could make a profitable impact on the American people by appearing among them as an apostle of peace. What were his hopes of persuading the President we cannot know. But he doubtless hoped to impress his host with his desire for a settlement and his wish to avoid an armed conflict. The question to which no public statement has yet given a clear answer is whether his attempt to reassure the President went so far as to provide that "certainty that our status and rights in Berlin will be respected" which the President declared in his broadcast of September 10 to be the condition for a summit meeting.

In his press conference after the talks, the President did not say that the Soviet leader had given any such undertaking; what he did say was that Khrushchev had assured him that there had been nothing final said about Berlin and that negotiations could now take place without anyone being under any duress. Eisenhower may, indeed, have considered Khrushchev's declaration that a threat had never been intended as equivalent to a withdrawal of the threat, and that he could therefore proceed to a formal summit conference—without any inconsistency with his pledge to make a Soviet recognition of Western rights in Berlin a condition of holding the conference.

But Khrushchev's reassurances, in the form in which the President communicated them to the press, cannot be regarded as satisfactory. It is nonsense for Khrushchev to say he never intended any duress; and as long as he does not specifically declare that Western rights will be respected, whether a new agreement on Berlin can be reached or not, the duress remains. The threat which has been made is that if the West does not make a new agreement with Moscow—on terms which Moscow regards as adequate within a period which Moscow regards as not too long—then Russia and Poland will protect East Germany in steps which the East German government thinks it is proper to take to liquidate the so-called abnormal situation in West Berlin. That threat has not been withdrawn; and while it remains it must overshadow all negotiations.

It can, of course, be argued that the West should go on negotiating whether under duress or not, for in the last resort the duress can be defied if there is no willingness on the other side to relax it. But in that case it would be far better for a democratic statesman to be quite frank about the situation in talking to his own people, so that they may be under no delusion as to what is happening and ready to support him adequately if the affair reaches a stage of crisis.

It was noticed, moreover, at the President's press conference that he said he agreed with Khrushchev that the situation in Berlin was "abnormal." In one sense that is indeed obvious; but it is disastrous to say so without the essential qualification that the situation in East Germany is also abnormal, and that the East German "abnormality" is the cause of the "abnormality" of West Berlin. In constantly emphasizing the abnormality of West Berlin, an enclave a hundred miles within Communist-controlled territory, Khrushchev is trying to project the idea of something contrary to the natural and reasonable order of things which must be eliminated for the sake of international

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peace. But what is really abnormal is that Russian power should be holding a third of the German people under a dictatorship which could not otherwise be sustained. If the Western position in Berlin is admitted to be something extraordinary in an environment which is accepted as normal, then the Western case is given away even before negotiations begin. East Germany is as much one of the "last traces of the Second World War" as West Berlin, and the West cannot agree that the former is to be regarded as a fact of a higher order of validity than the latter.

WE do not know what the two statesmen said to each other at Camp David about Germany, but we must assume that they discussed various possibilities in the endeavor to find a basis on which negotiations could be carried on. The results of these discussions are not yet clear, but one can state broadly the possible solutions of the German question which are open to discussion. Four appear to be within the bounds of practical politics:

1. Germany to be unified on the basis of free elections and free to conclude alliances at will. This has been so far the objective of official Western policy.

2. Germany to be unified by a confederation of West and East Germany coming together as equal partners. This would involve internally a combination of democratic and Communist elements and, externally, a position of neutrality for the confederate state. This is the current objective of Soviet policy.

3. Germany to be unified on the basis of free elections, but thereafter to be neutral, i.e. to be internally a democracy, but externally attached to neither of the power blocs.

4. Germany to remain, as at present, divided between two states, but full diplomatic recognition to be accorded by the West to the East German government in return for specific recognition of West Berlin as an outlying piece of West German territory and stringent guarantees of access to it. On this basis the two German states would continue to belong to the NATO and Warsaw Pact alliances respectively.

Of these four possibilities, the first must now be ruled out as unattainable, because the prospect of a reunified Germany joining NATO is not one which the Soviet Union can be expected to accept as long as it has a puppet regime in East Germany and the military power to keep it there. On the other hand, the second is a solution which the West will not contemplate as long as the West Germans themselves do not in their majority desire it. For, by giving the Communists a position of built-in privilege within a unified Germany, it would effectively destroy German democracy, and there would be every probability that the political monstrosity thus created would in a short time become a satellite of the Soviet Union.

There remain solutions three and four. Any scheme involving the neutralization of Germany is open to serious objections, both because of the loss of West German forces to the Atlantic Alliance and because of the danger that an isolated Germany might pursue a policy of adventure by shifting its weight between the two blocs. Nevertheless, this solution, if Russia could be brought to accept it, would be, from the West's point of view, well worth the sacrifices and risks it involved; it would reunify Germany, preserve German democracy, and automatically solve the problem of Berlin. Nobody doubts that genuinely free all-German elections would leave the Communists in a small minority, and there would be good reason to expect that the society emerging from the reunification would be a peaceful one concentrated on economic progress, as West Germany is now. If the Oder-Neisse frontier with Poland were also to be recognized and internationally guaranteed as part of the settlement, Germany's neighbors would be relieved of their fears of German revisionism, and the desire of the Czech and Polish peoples—as distinct from their Communist parties—for Russian protection would be correspondingly weakened.

If the Russians were concerned only with their own strategic security, they should be

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well pleased with a bargain which interposes a neutral buffer between themselves and the NATO which they profess to regard as aggressive. Whether they accept it or not, it would be well for the West to give the fullest publicity to proposals—assuming that they could be agreed upon among the Western governments concerned—for a formula of free elections plus neutrality as a solution for the German problem; it would certainly impress world opinion as a reasonable basis for a settlement. It is unlikely, however, that Khrushchev would be ready to accept it, because it would involve the disappearance of the Ulbricht regime in East Germany and therefore a large-scale territorial retreat of Communism, which would be highly dangerous for the stability of the system in other East European satellites and even in the Soviet Union itself. Moreover, it would mean that the Kremlin had definitely given up the hope of dominating Germany —and through Germany, Western Europe as a whole; but there is no reason to believe this to be so.

Given the fundamentals of Soviet policy insofar as they can be ascertained, it must be Khrushchev's aim that the tension produced by the division of Germany should be either resolved by a settlement on Russia's terms or not resolved at all. But, confronted with the risks of war over Berlin, and yet in need of some gain which he can represent as a notable diplomatic success, he may perhaps be considering for the time being an agreement on the lines of the fourth, a solution whereby he would get full international recognition of the East German regime in return for confirming and defining the rights of the West in Berlin.

Such a limited agreement, involving much less departure from the status quo than any of the other possibilities mentioned, would probably be acceptable to Bonn because, after the equality of representation given to the two German states at the recent Foreign Ministers' conference, the outlawry of Pankow is in any case a thing of the past, and formal recognition is no longer an intolerable violation of principle.

Once the two Germanys were internationally recognized, they could both become members of the United Nations, and this would set the precedent for the three other cases of countries in which Communist and anti-Communist states now coexist with the support of their respective power blocs—that is to say, Korea, Vietnam, and China. China was in any case one of the subjects of discussion in the Eisenhower-Khrushchev talks, for Khrushchev left for Peking after his visit to Washington, and he had to be able to say there that he pressed Communist China's claims for seating in the United Nations. Certainly he was not reluctant to do so, for he knows that the divergence between American and British policies toward China is one of the most vulnerable points in the front of the Western powers, and he was also aware that the recent additions of Asian and African members to the United Nations have made it very doubtful whether an Assembly majority in favor of Peking can be averted much longer. On the other hand, the United States is bound by a solemn treaty of alliance with the Nationalist government in Formosa and cannot repudiate it without utterly destroying its credit as an ally. In these circumstances a formula which would provide for recognition of both the Peking and Taipeh governments would be the best attainable solution, and it would follow naturally from recognition of the two Germanys.

THERE is, finally, disarmament. A spectacular initiative for disarmament, indeed, featured Khrushchev's visit to America; but it was not an agreement or approach to the subject reached as a result of his conversations with the President. Rather, it was the grand gesture of world demagogy contained in his address to the United Nations General Assembly. That Khrushchev should urge total disarmament of all nations within four years, at a time when the West is menaced by the use of Soviet military power to alter the status quo in Germany, is a piece of political salesmanship so impudent that it must command admiration for the nerve of

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a politician who can do it without embarrassment.

It would be unwise to underestimate the appeal of the radical simplicity of Khrushchev's proposal, in contrast to the complicated schemes produced by those who are genuinely trying to find the basis on which nations can agree to scale down their armaments. The world today is not in a condition in which nations can discard all means of defense without evidence of general honesty, good will, and acceptance of a reign of law in international relations, including a universal readiness to submit to an all-seeing inspection without veto or obstruction. Nothing in the history of Communist states up to the present is any ground for confidence in their genuine will to cooperate honestly with a system of the type which Khrushchev has proposed. Disarmament cannot be a cure for the tensions of the cold war; when it comes, it will be the consequence of their abatement.

In only one field of armaments is it reasonable to hope for a speedy agreement, and even this is not, strictly speaking, a matter of disarming. It would be a great encouragement to all mankind, and an immense gain for the world reputation of the United States, if an agreement to stop all tests of nuclear weapons were concluded without further haggling about an inspection system which Russia is evidently determined to deprive of real knave-proof effectiveness.

The undertaking on the American side should be unconditional, because in this matter—in contrast to most kinds of arms limitation or prohibition—it cannot make much difference if the other side cheats. "Enough is plenty," as Eisenhower himself said; America has enough bombs and sufficient knowledge of how to detonate them; the real rivalry now is in the development of missiles and counter-missiles. Since there is general agreement among scientists that nuclear testing is to some degree harmful to the present and future health of mankind, a ban on it is desirable even if the Russians secretly go on with explosions underground. They will be able to do that anyway under the proposed system of "quotas" for on-the-spot investigations, for any child can see that if x inspections are allowed in one year, the way to cheat is simply to arrange x innocent explosions for investigation and then make $x + 1$ the nuclear test.

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THE DANGERS OF LITERACY

Has Democracy Debased Culture?

DAVID DAICHES

MASS literacy is a new phenomenon in the history of civilization, and it is no surprise that thoughtful people find its effects disturbing. When ability to read no longer guarantees participation in a living intellectual tradition, when a generalized notion of "culture" has a prestige far wider than the spread of any proper training in the patterns of thinking and feeling, then the way is open for every kind of charlatanism, pedantry, educational self-kidding, muddle-headed pretentiousness, and plausible cant. Jacques Barzun provides rich documentation of all this in a book* by whose examples few sensible readers will not be shaken and whose anxieties most will share, but about whose arguments many will have mixed feelings.

The symptoms of our modern ailment—which is not exclusively American but one which afflicts our whole Western civilization—are not difficult to describe, whether they are graduate students in history who burble sophisticatedly about Hegel without knowing the meaning of some of the simplest words in the English language or even the precise meaning of B.C. and A.D., or the behavior of the large American foundations in endowing "projects" conceived in grandiosely woolly terms and described in polysyllabic doubletalk. Diagnosis, however, is more difficult. What exactly has gone wrong, and how? And what is the proper cure? Mr. Barzun, whose chief zest is demonstrated when he describes the symptoms, has his own answers to the first two of these questions. About the cure he has little if anything to say, at least directly, though certain kinds of treatment seem to be implied in the way he conducts his diagnosis.

Consider the argument in Mr. Barzun's chapter on "Conversation, Manners, and the Home." The art of conversation, he tells us, is dead or dying; in contemporary talk, there must never be any real disagreement, the contradicter being either a fool or a snob. He quotes de Tocqueville: "I know of no country in which there is so little independence of mind and real freedom of discussion as in America," and he illustrates how this is even more true today. "Torn between the fear of error and the fear of being thought inhuman, hating to be misunderstood and hating even worse to be misliked, we verbally cast off self-confidence and throw ourselves on the mercy of the court, saying 'frankly' before every sentence and giving warning that we are going to be 'candid.'" The "routine hypocrisy concealing a desperate wish to placate" is perhaps at the present moment more of an American than a European phenomenon, but still Mr. Barzun is right in seeing it linked with the nature of modern democratic society. There is a "mutual tenderness" in our conversational relations with each other, and "we coax rather than flatter and we do it by whittling down the self so as to spare vanity the smallest hurt."

What it is in modern society that encourages this, is clearly worth some investigating;

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perhaps it has something to do with the fact that, in an age of increasing specialization of knowledge, what many individuals really know is strictly "shop" and socially unintelligible, so talkers must find a common ground of non-expert agreement. In, say, the 18th century, when an educated man was reasonably well-informed about the whole intellectual world of his day, conversation could range widely and often belligerently over a great variety of topics. (Consider the enormous number of subjects on which Dr. Johnson talked with at least an air of authority.) In an age of the expert, conversation is either professional talk with other experts or a mutually vanity-sparing exchange of platitudes.

This would, of course, only apply to professional people—but then it is largely professional people to whom Mr. Barzun's description applies. One does not find this desperate desire to placate in listening to the conversation of truck drivers or miners; one finds it all the time at university cocktail parties. True, one finds it even more strongly among businessmen, where it would seem to be a form of public relations, part of the businessman's necessity of being liked that we see in one of its lower forms in *Death of a Salesman*. The phenomenon itself is obviously complex, and any explanation is complex, but Mr. Barzun's explanation is simple: democracy. "It is popular government which has made accountability universal and thus caused everybody to be forever 'selling himself' to everybody else. . . . Conversely, in a society that had little free movement but fixed ranks and set forms, the most rapacious merchant could go through life without fawning and would not dare sell himself or anything else during social intercourse."

In other words, a rigid class structure makes for good conversation, while a more egalitarian society dissolves all conversation in placatory gestures because "everybody senses that in the free agitation of so many human molecules anyone may become one another's customer, relative, employee, or 'opposite number.'" There is *some* truth in this theory, but let us take a closer look. Did merchants in more class-ridden societies "go through life without fawning"? Has Mr. Barzun studied the portraits of merchants in, say, Elizabethan and Jacobean drama and the 18th- and 19th-century novel? Merchants in earlier times normally mixed socially only with members of their own class, but when they had the opportunity to meet a member of the aristocracy, "fawning" is exactly what they did, if literature is to be trusted. The picture of the merchant fawning on the impoverished aristocrat in order to get at least part of his bill paid is one of the commonest in English literature. I remember myself when I first came south from Edinburgh to Oxford, to find myself in a society still very much (this was in 1934) class bound, how surprised and revolted I was by the fawning of the city merchants and tradesmen before students. The idea was to encourage students to run up huge bills; they were given almost unlimited credit, because the "young gentlemen" were expected eventually to come into their inheritance, when of course they would at once be dunned by the tradesmen. This was already an anachronism in 1934, but it was a genuine relic of the older society to which Mr. Barzun harks back. The lick-spittle deference with which tailors, wine merchants, hairdressers, and others talked to students (who were "gentlemen") is something I shall never forget. One sees the same thing in the novels of Thackeray, in 18th-century drama, and in earlier English literature.

Of course I know what Mr. Barzun is getting at and I sympathize with what he is doing. I agree wholeheartedly with his analysis of the effects of a false egalitarianism on education and of the refusal of so many modern educators to recognize differences in ability and aptitude among pupils of the same age. I enjoy his wit and appreciate the ironic relish with which he exposes so many of our modern educational and cultural falsities and confusions. I do not (though my own politics are what might

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very generally be called "left") have much sympathy with those of his critics who take fright at once at any suggestion that democracy has its drawbacks and that there is a lot to be said for educating an elite. Indeed, I believe in an intellectual elite and I believe in democracy because I want such an elite to be properly educated wherever it can be found, regardless of financial or social position. At the same time, we must not allow ourselves to set up, however implicitly, an ideal from the past without looking at that past at least as closely as we look at the present. When and in what conditions did the ideal conversation which Mr. Barzun desiderates take place? And what relation did it actually have to the class situation?

THE educated middle and upper-middle classes of the 19th century, whom Mr. Barzun much admires, were great talkers but not as a rule great conversationalists. Neither Carlyle nor Mill nor Ruskin nor Arnold were great conversationalists. In the country houses of the landed gentry a wearisome deal of empty social chatter in which nothing was said, with a certain drawling elegance, went on daily (see Trollope and other novelists). Professional wits like Sydney Smith at the beginning of the century and Oscar Wilde at the end were not conversationalists but wisecrackers, masters of repartee and epigram, for whom the conversational game was not one between equals but simply an opportunity to get off the (as often as not) previously prepared witticism.

Must we go further back to find ideal conversation? Is it to be found in the dialogue of Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano* and similar Renaissance works? Hardly: this is philosophical dialogue, whose ultimate model is Plato, rather than conversation. It is certainly not to be found in the affected conversation of Elizabethan courtiers, mocked by Shakespeare in *Love's Labour's Lost* and elsewhere. It is perhaps to be found, stylized and perfected, in the dialogue between Mirabell and Millamant in Congreve's *The Way of the World*: this is the "conversation of gentlemen" on which Dryden wished to model poetic diction. It is, as Congreve presents it, an enchanting game of witty exchange, in substance utterly trivial, in manner poised and perfect. Is this what Mr. Barzun wants? Clearly not, for he tells us that the true conversationalist must "mix the raw material of experience with some thought that gives a handle to further thought, to disagreement, to speculation—Yeats's 'phantasy.'" To be sure, Mr. Barzun adds: "Any subject—a lost button—then becomes matter for conversation and a source of delight," and this suggests that conversation *is* only a game, but the implication is that the lost button is only the starting point that leads to higher things.

Is it the conversation of the 17th- and 18th-century French salon that Mr. Barzun wishes to revive? But this was surely too specialized, too self-consciously intellectual, to fit Mr. Barzun's description, and in any case it often consisted of a literary dictator laying down the law to disciples. Is it Dr. Johnson's famous conversation? Again Dr. Johnson, who "talked for victory" and was in manner authoritarian and peremptory, was a talker rather than a conversationalist; he never really listened, and never weighed any opposing arguments, dealing with opposition like a steamroller.

The fact is that good conversation of the kind Mr. Barzun describes has been extremely rare in any period of our history. The factors that militate against it today—and they range from television to the modern mystique of public relations—are quite different from those which operated earlier, and they corrupt or destroy conversation in different ways. We no longer have today the offensively silly social chat of the 19th-century country house, and our pedantry is not the pedantry of 18th-century chaplains and schoolmasters or Renaissance grammarians; our silliness and our pedantry are different, because the causes are different. If one looks at the "betting books" of Oxford Senior Common Rooms, records of bets between dons on matters which came up in conversation over port, we get some idea of the conversation of the gentleman and scholar over

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the past two hundred years, and the glimpse is not encouraging, even if it shows something very different from the conversation of professors at faculty clubs in modern American universities. I think myself that the conversation at the faculty clubs is as a rule altogether more interesting and civilized. As a matter of historical fact, good conversation at England's two older universities has been revived in recent years by dons who more often than not came up from humble backgrounds; the indolent insolence of manner and narrowness of interest of the older type of don have disappeared only recently. I am not sure what the moral is, unless it is that in looking for solutions to our present discontents we must seek a way *out,* not *back.*

MR. BARZUN is a historian, and one of my objections to his book is that he is not historical enough. The present is particularized while the past is generalized; or, if the past is not generalized, incidents are picked out with misleading casualness. For example, in discussing the division of labor between the literate Church and the illiterate temporal power in the Middle Ages, Mr. Barzun quotes Harold Nicolson in a footnote: "The Emperor Frederick II, for instance, was wont to sneer at King René of Sicily for his addiction to the arts, obliging that monarch to indulge his gift for painting in the privacy of his own closet. Learning was derided as a practice fit only for clerks and bearing no relation to knightly duties and accomplishments."

Thus Nicolson, *apud* Barzun. The Emperor Frederick II is being cited as an illiterate monarch sneering at culture and the arts. I cannot believe that Mr. Barzun does not know how monstrous this is as history. Frederick II was one of the most learned men of his age, *stupor mundi et immutator mirabilis,* whose brilliant Sicilian court was one of the greatest centers of international culture the world has ever known. Here Moslem, Jewish, and Christian scholars met together and translated each other's works; here Michael Scott translated Aristotle and Averroes, and many other original and intrepid minds worked under Frederick's eager patronage. Frederick himself, something of a freethinker who (as a monkish chronicler sadly records) "even took baths on Sundays," anticipated the ideal of the Renaissance Prince who combined knowledge and power and to whom knowledge *was* power.

It does not make any real difference to the tenor of Mr. Barzun's argument whether the example is accurate or not; yet, the fact that Mr. Barzun sees fit to quote his history at second hand through the work of an amateur and that he allows an absurd implication to stand is thoroughly disturbing. Let me repeat: I think he is right in most of what he says about our present cultural ills and their relation to universal literacy and even to democracy; but wherever he goes to the past to illustrate a point or show how things were once better, I find him hasty in generalization and careless in illustration. (Incidentally, the real point of the reference to Frederick and René suggests a conflict between intellectual and artistic activities which Mr. Barzun later on refers to as a modern phenomenon.)

I shall take only one other example. "Where," asks Mr. Barzun, "have intellectuals learned, together with anti-intellectualism, these diffident gestures of the spirit?" (He is referring to "the shuffling manners of democracy and the modern artist's oblique thrust at society.") His answer is: in the novel. "The novel from its beginning in *Don Quixote* and *Tom Jones* has persistently made war on two things—our culture and the heroic." This just will not do. The anti-heroic element in the novel (which is related to the anti-heroic element in the medieval *fabliau,* both the product of a rising middle class) is far too complex a matter to be brought in in this breezy manner as an explanation of a modern phenomenon. Our intellectuals have *learned* their anti-intellectualism, and other things, from the novel—*learned* it, mind you. What an odd notion of cause and effect!

The "low mimetic" mode of the novel (to use Northrop Frye's useful term) is itself,

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of course, a product of certain impulses and related to certain social situations. The possibilities of heroism in the modern commercial or industrial world, and the hero appearing as fool if he persists in feudal heroic manners in a post-feudal age, are important themes in the European novel. Oddly enough, the novelist who saw this most clearly was the novelist whom Barzun cites in a footnote as having avoided this theme and "attempted to portray heroic heroes." In Scott's best novels (e.g., *The Heart of Midlothian* and *Redgauntlet*) the possibilities of active heroism in the modern world are carefully explored with the conclusion that they do not really exist: the active hero appears in the end as fool or exhibitionist or merely as a case for the police, and the true heroism of the modern world lies in prudence (Baillie Nicol Jarvie in *Rob Roy*) or quiet and humble determination (Jeanie Deans in *The Heart of Midlothian*). Again, the example is unimportant, but it shows Mr. Barzun using a popular illusion about the past instead of drawing on clearly realized knowledge of his own; and this is not good enough in a historian. Apart, however, from the accuracy of particular references, what are we to say of the argument that the modern intellectuals' anti-intellectualism has been learned from the novel? I am at a loss; perhaps we might begin by suggesting that Mr. Barzun read carefully the novels of Jane Austen and George Eliot.

There are, of course, plenty of novels which do work in the direction indicated by Mr. Barzun and I think I know why he says what he does. But to see the relation between fictional realism and modern self-suspicion as simply one of cause and effect rather than as the complicated interweaving of many factors with, in some instances, the same causes operating on both phenomena, is altogether too slick. "The inflection of a voice, the angle at which a head is carried, the coarse hairs that grow on the back of a hand—at some time or other, every physical accident has served a novelist to characterize the victim or the instrument of a moral lesson." Very true. It is also true that modern techniques of psychological analysis have helped to dissolve value in description: no man is a hero to his valet—or to his psychoanalyst. There are ways in which knowledge destroys value (cf. Huxley's description of the acoustical and physiological aspects of the playing of a Bach suite in *Point Counter Point*) and destroys responsibility (this man can't be held guilty of murder because he saw something horrid in the woodshed at the age of three and was brought up in a slum). The point I want to make is that Mr. Barzun's observation is related to the wider question of the relation of knowledge and value in our civilization, and that to explore *this* relationship rather than to isolate "the novel" as a cause would surely be more profitable. I do not wish to be thought to be criticizing Mr. Barzun for not doing what he never intended to do; but his book clearly sets out to be a description and diagnosis of some basic ills in our culture and we have the right to expect that he will follow his insights through.

Most of us have a sneaking sympathy with Yeats's country-house ideal and a nostalgia for the order and elegance of a society more ritualized and hierarchized than ours is or could be today. A society where literacy is confined to a few, all of whom share a common intellectual training and background, can avoid many of the evils—the watered education, the pseudo-jargon, the self-hate of the intellectual—which Mr. Barzun and I deplore. But let us not forget the horrors which those societies produced: the waste, the cruelty, the suffering, the wanton disregard for human personality in all but a small minority. When Pope wrote a poem lamenting the death in a lightning storm of a farm laborer and the girl he was going to marry, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu made devastating fun of him for imagining that the lives or deaths of a couple of country bumpkins could be of any interest or worth any poetic comment, and Lady Mary spoke for her class, the ladies and gentlemen who appreciated good literature and good conversation. We think of the few ex-

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ceptional country houses, and remember the Countess of Pembroke or the Duchess of Bedford or even Lady Gregory and forget the innumerable affectations, pretensions, snobberies, and boredoms in the lives of the great majority of members of the nobility and landed gentry.

"The generation born . . . between 1860 and 1880 retained traditions of intellect and presumably could have transmitted them, not intact, perhaps, which no tradition can ever be, but unimpaired. That generation fathered one of intellectual cripples by being itself emotionally lamed." It was emotionally lamed because it discovered compassion and responsibility as more than matters for witty conversation in drawing rooms. The preceding generation, who were presumably not emotionally lamed and could therefore enjoy their House of Intellect in all its purity, were responsible for some of the most appalling social conditions ever to prevail in a civilized society. It is always salutary, whenever one is overcome by the deficiencies of one's contemporary culture, to look at the other side of an earlier age whose surface we may find appealing, and I suggest to Mr. Barzun that he read through the *Report of the Committee on Factory Children's Labour* of 1831 and the two *Reports of the Factory Commissions* of 1833. I am sure that Mr. Barzun knows all about the conditions there described; but a periodic re-reading of these reports is an insurance against romanticizing the past. The critical and humane intelligence first of the Enlightenment and then of the Great Victorians brought us where we are today. If we do not like all the features of our present-day landscape (and who does?) the answer is surely to apply our critical intelligence and our humanity ever more determinedly so that we can reach a state where we may reap the fruits of that impressive movement while removing its drawbacks. It will not be easy, and we have a great deal to learn from history, but it must be history faced squarely in all its implications.

The indictment drawn up by Mr. Barzun is persuasive and terrifying, and most of us could add our own list of horrible examples. Yet civilization has a resilience that can defy all the rules and all the signs. I agree with Mr. Barzun in his analysis of the defects of modern American education and I am chauvinistic enough to take pleasure in the thought that British education, though it has its own deficiencies and problems, has not yet gone as far as American education has down the path he has charted. Yet when I read certain modern American poets and novelists, I am aware of a vitality and of a culture really working which I miss in contemporary British writing.

Culture has its ways of surprising us. One of the results of the deficiencies of modern American education is that many of the best American minds are today genuinely self-educated (i.e., educated in spite of having gone to high school and college). Consider the curiously impressive weaving of "cultural" references into the texture of the narrative of *The Adventures of Augie March*. That seems to me a most significant achievement, and it sounds like the product of real self-education. I read it as a symbol or a symptom of something that is happening in American culture that perhaps indicates a new line of vitality for Western culture as a whole. In the face of this, many of the objections, so true, so persuasive, so productive of despair, fall away. This is more than an American hope, just as it is more than an American problem. America is but modern industrial democratic civilization writ large. Goethe, writing of the human heart, exclaimed *"Hier oder nirgends ist Amerika."* We might reverse that and say of America, *"Hier oder nirgends ist Europa"* or, better, *"Hier oder nirgends ist das Abendland."* I am not sure whether this is a cause for despair or for hope; like so many people, I suppose I alternate between the two. But it is certainly a reason for observing and diagnosing the state of American culture with care, even with anxiety. That is why a book such as Mr. Barzun's, though I quarrel with certain parts of it, seems to me important. Let us hope it will take its place as one contribution to a great and necessary debate.

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THE "AFFLUENT" KIBBUTZIM

Ideology and Complacency

GERDA L. COHEN

REVISITING the Jordan Valley, we thought how prosperous, and how ugly, it had become. Not only the immigrant suburbia clinging to the yellow hills over Tiberias, but the kibbutzim also, their collective rectangularity grown as commonplace and neutral as the porridge doled out in their dining halls each day. "Until our heroic settlers came in 1908, the whole area was swamp," boomed a tourist guide annotating our way along Lake Kinneret; a saucer of blue jelly, quivering with heat, its brim reflected date palms as a row of exclamation marks. "The finest dates in the Middle East," we heard, "are grown by Kvutzat Kinneret." Unable to challenge this, everyone gazed through the violet bus roof, speechless with warmth. An odor of stale milk stifled the pungency of eucalyptus. "Degania, Mother of Communes"—we almost ran over a cow bolting from its historic haven—"owns the finest dairy in the Middle East." Avoiding the lawn where a tangle of Degania children were fighting, we filed along the path into Bet Gordon, "dedicated to the man who taught the Religion of Self-Labor." The face of A. D. Gordon, a mournful sepia, regarded the museum put up in his honor with faint surprise. He brought to mind a rabbi beloved of Rembrandt, not an apostle of toil. On the way out, we saw a matron nearing seventy, in laced boots and patched overalls. Her chin was a chunk of fumed oak. "Miriam Baratz," whispered the guide, "has got up at midnight to milk the herd for forty-four years. A real heroine."

Past banana groves atremble like paper windmills, we sped down the Jordan rift. Blocks of boiled pink concrete rose above the plantations. An immigrant town? "Afikim," declaimed the guide proudly, "the second largest kibbutz in Israel. Population 2,000." We could hear them to a man, noisily dining in a mammoth hangar with flies black on the mosquito netting. Another din racketed from Afikim's plywood factory, where trees vanished in a typhoon of sawdust. Kibbutz technicians ran the mill, whose workmen came mainly from town. "They earn good wages," the manager assured us on a slightly apologetic note, "though of course we prefer to do without hired labor." A. D. Gordon, hanging faded in his shrine, would have given a dusty smile. "You understand," the manager eased a handkerchief underneath his damp collar, "this factory brings in half our total revenue. Mixed farming is such a drain on manpower, we really keep it up for ideological reasons."

Dodging children on bikes, we went through a maze of laundry to the pink tenements. Cars stood behind them, and bicycles in front. "They were imported through our personal Reparations," explained a kibbutz founder on that same note of defensive apology, hastening to add: "the remainder of our Reparations go to a cultural fund." Stricter kibbutzim would not let their members keep any cash from Germany. "I've heard some *chaverim* left in protest. You can't deny human nature, can you?" he queried doubtfully. He and his wife Rachel had an apartment in the Veterans' Quarter, furnished with a blameless, off-beige neutrality. A shower and toilet led off the bed-sitting room, whose neatness was in pointed

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contrast to the communal buildings. "It's a relief not to walk half an hour for a wash," said Rachel, pouring tea into the china allocated to each couple, "but I remember the old days . . . how happy we were, singing and arguing in that tin shed; and hot water only on Fridays." Afikim now provided constant hot water in conduits which gave an industrial look to their home. Rachel, her silvery bun raked from a red weather-beaten neck, wore shorts and a permanent air of disapproval. "Won't you have a bite with us?" fetching curd cheese from their tiny kitchenette. "We don't always eat in the kibbutz dining hall."

"There's such a queue," her husband smiled rather guiltily, "and nowadays, you mightn't even know the fellow sitting opposite. Of course, we have all kinds of luxuries: oil on the salad, and paper napkins —imagine!" He spooned up a lump of the jam ration distributed for private use. "How different it was years ago . . . we had poor food then, but it tasted wonderful."

WHAT has become of the kibbutzim? Have they found the good life, only to lose their own soul? Critics on the sterner left (Hashomer Hatzair, for example) have been predicting this degeneration ever since tea kettles were issued to comrades. On the laxer center bloc (Mapai affiliated), the change is variously attributed to "socialist dynamic," or plain growing out of the adolescent stage. Looking back, one can see why reactions differ. The proto-groups which banded to form the kibbutz movement grew out of circumstances: or rather, their particular vision of mankind reborn, fitted conveniently into the colonization needs of Zion. Arthur Ruppin, then head of the Palestine Office, and an acute sociologist, used to argue: "It's not a question of preferring group settlement to the individual kind. It's either groups or nothing." The ten unillusioned young men and two women who Hebraized "Um Jumi" into Degania, went there after a lonely apprenticeship: stone-breaking under an Arab overseer, or picking grapes for Jewish farmers who owed their full stomach to Baron de Rothschild. Even there at Um Jumi, they earned wages from the Palestine Office, which took half their profit in return for providing stock. The dozen friends at Degania called themselves simply a *kvutza,* a group, without any ideological twist. They all came from the Ukraine, sharing memories of endless lemon tea with illegal pamphlets, of pickled herring and anguish, and dancing all night before the golden Torah crown. Ploughing the steamy mud of Jordan, they wore Tolstoyan smocks, for they'd left Russia before the Bolshevik revolution could sour their ideals. Their grown-up children look like a photo of Zionist youth in 1906, even to the firm, outflung mustaches and broad Slav brow. Today, their comrades dominate the Histadrut, which is tantamount to dominating the State of Israel. Their kibbutzim show a flexibility of principle which adherents term "realism" and opponents further left castigate with relish as "betrayal."

In the main, those opponents migrated to Palestine after World War I, from Galicia. Born in a *shtetl* environment more rancid with poverty and oppression than the Pale of the Ukraine, they rebelled against it the more violently. Their hatred for Judaism grew in recollection of Talmudical squalor, the sharp reek of burning feathers, and blood spattering the Polish boor in his patriotic slaughter. Youth movements put doctrinaire steel into their thinking. They revolted not only against the *shtetl,* but against all bourgeois ghettos. Unlike the pre-war generation, they formulated a creed: Abolish private property (not merely share for friendship's sake). Abolish patriarchal society by making the child dependent on the community (whereas Kinneret had established a nursery to free the mothers). Abolish exploitation, by limiting their own enterprise. (Degania, by comparison, added orchards to their field crops: comrades from other branches could then help with the harvesting of the crops, replacing the hired farmhands.)

As might be expected, they held a more extreme view of the Marxist mission than

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did the earlier pioneers. They divided the world into black and white: the top-hatted, black-hearted Capitalist, and the Prole in his modest white Sunday shirt. America was black, Russia white. This attitude hardly obtruded during World War II, nor when the War of Liberation cemented all kibbutzim to defeat the enemy without. But no sooner had peace flown back, than catastrophe tore the collective movement in two. Today, after eight years, events are still dated "before the Split" or "after the Split." Both sides had factions in the Knesset and in the national organization wryly named the United Kibbutz. The latter had become a stronghold of the extreme left, according to the Mapai comrades who broke away to form their own Union of Kibbutzim with other collectives of the same party. A factual précis cannot convey the bitter hysteria of the split. Nothing short of civil war raged in places where the factions held equal sway: barbed wire cleft Ein Harod, while police used tear gas in Yiftah.*

Why such passion over a nuance of ideology? Anyone who has seen a kibbutz elder —his whole life a paean of brotherhood—go literally purple over some minor political argument, will begin to comprehend. It's as if aggression pushed below by the discipline of collective living jumps up through any outlet. The split made a mockery of kibbutz pretensions to beatitude, and shattered the movement's strength in parliament. On the credit side, many collectives which had grown somewhat drear and stagnant felt their blood race again: they took in "refugees" from the enemy camp, and sent out new groups which qualified for better housing than the parent settlement. Although a mere shadow differentiates the two blocs today, they remain divided by acid memory and conflict at the top. While the Labor parties quarrel, there's no hope of a kibbutz merger. Small absurdities wrought by the split have been righted: the United Kibbutz orchestra, which lost half its wood winds and a kettledrum, found harmony again with musicians from the other camp. An inter-bloc committee coordinates wholesale purchasing for all the kibbutzim.

About 60,000 comrades, therefore, owe allegiance either to the United Kibbutz or the Union of Kibbutzim—each claiming to be larger and truer to its pristine belief than the rival organization. In actual fact, the sectarian unions of Hashomer Hatzair and Religious Labor have each in their own way kept truer faith. For a hidden destroyer of the commune is precisely that urge to wax powerful and multiply.

BETWEEN 1908 and 1948, far more collective villages came into being than cooperative small-holdings like Nahalal. But mass immigration brought a reverse: the collectives took in barely 3 per cent of the influx, which has flowed mainly to town or small-holdings created by the Jewish Agency. This couldn't be otherwise, considering that an illiterate Kurdish peasant—or for that matter, a *kolkhoz*-hating Polish clerk—won't take kindly to a wageless nine-hour day crowned by a committee meeting. On the other hand, the kibbutz needed labor and the immigrant needed a job. All kibbutzim suffer from chronic shortage of manpower, maybe because they bite off more than they can comfortably chew. The wretched *sadran avoda*, allocating work after supper each night, vainly juggles the conflicting demands of farm, kitchen, guard duty, party quota for political tasks in town, and at his elbow—some haggard comrade who should have gone to a seminar on imperialism. If the manpower gap should widen to an abyss (say, the potato crop must be lifted), then everyone submits to deprivation of Shabbat, the only day of rest. Discreetly, the Religion of Self-Labor crumbled before the advantages of hired help. Granite authoritarians compromised by allowing help for "non-productive work." In our particular kibbutz, we underpaid Arabs to hew building stone, yet debarred them from hoeing melon. Collectives with a factory to maintain—Givat Brenner, Ashdot Ya'acov, and Huliot being among the first—soon suc-

*See "Kibbutz Ain Harod Faces Up to Prague." By A. V. Sherman (March 1953).

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cumbed to pressure from within and without. The high-principled ones relied on "volunteer" aid from city youth bully-ragged into donating their vacations.

Aliens in the commune mean a decline of fraternity. "We never locked a door until the immigrant workmen came," is a frequent cry. The Persian teen-agers training at our kibbutz were unpopular, allegedly because they didn't work hard enough to justify their afternoon Hebrew study. When laundry vanished from the communal tub, and the kitchen reported an even graver dearth of cutlery than usual, the Persians began to decamp en masse. Their luggage was searched with fruitful result. Although everyone berated this "failure of educational method," and insisted on getting another batch, the old trust had died. Giant kibbutzim, numbering upward of 1,000 plus junior groups, trainees, and so forth, aver that they can utilize men and material better than small *kvutzot*. Economically, they may be right. Socially, they have lost warmth and kinship. (The Hutterites in the United States, who have survived longer than any other utopian clan, limited each village to a couple of hundred brethren, obliging their young folk to colonize afresh.) Unless rigidly curbed, kibbutzim expand with age. And this development exacerbates what movement conferences entitle "the Problem of Woman." Unhappily, she continues to vex the agenda despite innumerable resolutions.

IN THEORY, female comrades have long been emancipated from domestic serfdom: they don't depend on men for their bread and status. The very word "husband"—in Hebrew, "owner"—has been replaced by "comrade." A couple will go on referring to each other as "my boy" or "my girl" until they're white-haired. In theory, motherhood no longer entails abandoning a vocation, for the commune takes over all responsibility from the moment of birth. In actuality, women have been freed from their individual children and husbands only to shoulder the collective child and husband. Some wives, it's true, enjoy marshaling a regiment of steam caldrons or beguiling eight infants to go on the pot simultaneously. Other wives pine for bourgeois enslavement. At least they'd be able to plan their own timetable and menu: an occasional omelet instead of boiled egg every day every year. "Meals are an agony," confessed the English-born wife of a kibbutz leader. "Worse than eating in Victoria Station." She hated her job: cleaning the toddlers' house where her flaxen-haired daughter grew up with eighteen others of the same age. "I'd be happy caring for Nurit all day," she knitted while her husband attended the inevitable committee, "but we'll never leave here. It's his whole life." For the matriarchs of collective trail-blazing, it was their whole life too. Miriam Baratz objected to keeping house for ploughmen who'd never heard of Emancipation. So she secretly learned milking from a local sheikh's wife, and confounded them all. After the Great War had shortened skirts and opened minds, the colonies became imbued with feminist zeal. Men even stayed in the kitchen—often a Gehenna of flies and fumes—to liberate their partners for work in the open air.

But pregnancy obliged some to iron the laundry instead of lug chicken-feed, while others found their outdoor jobs taken when they returned from confinement. In addition, as the commune wanted their progeny to be enlightened torchbearers, not simple peasantry, a great deal of personnel were required for education. Today, 67 per cent of the women are occupied by "services"—a label conveying subtle inferiority, due to lack of creative glamor. An even higher percentage would be necessary, but for a duty rota covering unpleasant chores over the weekend. Only septuagenarians are exempt from waiting at table.

Our kibbutz boasted the only fisher-girl in Israel, a calm Amazon who had to wage the feminist fight anew before the crew would accept her. Similar opposition met an American girl bursting with gumption and ideology, who determined to drive a tractor. She got her way, at the cost of general unpopularity.

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"Collective education is fine for our kids, but cruel for parents," exclaimed a mother at Yagur, daring a rebuke from the dragon head nurse by visiting her son at lunch. After they're weaned, children only see their parents for a couple of hours each evening. This is the magical time in every kibbutz, when families, new-scrubbed and smelling of clean linen, tumble on the little scrubby lawns with their children. "It's not enough," pleaded the girl from Yagur; "I'd give anything to cuddle Uri when he wakes up in the morning." It's significant that *kvutzot* like Degania, pragmatic rather than dogmatic, have never insisted on the generations maintaining separate quarters at night, whereas stricter kibbutzim didn't even allow parents to tuck their offspring into bed. Relaxation on this point, as on kindred matters of personal clothing and pocket money, show the encroachment of "normality." At one time, mothers unable to breast-feed were expected to work without fussing over their babies, because a nurse could hold the bottle just as well. They rebelled at this denial, and now complain that an hour off work for each feeding is inadequate.

In the good old pioneer era, marriage meant simply sharing a room. No one dreamed of enacting an empty ritual steeped in clerical falsehood and female subjugation. Kibbutz partnership, welded by affection, had no truck with the civil contract. When rationing hit our kibbutz hard, several couples with children volunteered to "marry" at the Rabbinate just to qualify for extra coupons. Imagine the chagrin of die-hard veterans when their own daughters, reared sanely and atheistically, demand a conventional wedding. Not merely some cake for the kibbutz, but a rabbi (hustled through his "mumbo-jumbo" with the minimum delay), a canopy held aloft on rifles, and a decadent white gown. What kind of comrade, then, has emerged from the collective educational system? Is he a torchbearer or a rural clod? Neither, despite awful prophecy all round. First and foremost, he wants to remain in the kibbutz, quietly, not struggling to evangelize the capitalist world. Half Israel's Cabinet rose from the movement, but their sons eschew politics. Taught from the cradle to live with and love their own intimate age group, they have no careerist ambition. Nor do they want to assume power in the caucus running each kibbutz by virtue of its superior initiative—a grave question looming, there, of transmitting responsibility. They look on individualism as anti-social. In their age groups, every child had to eat, excrete, and wash in unison. It prepared them so well for the adult community, they feel lost without regimentation. For that reason, perhaps, they command high praise in their military service. Kibbutz boys make excellent non-commissioned officers, as the casualty list proved after every reprisal raid.

To counterbalance the strict routine of their childhood, schooling brought an opposite degree of freedom. Formal education as evolved by the kibbutzim vetoes any kind of "artificial incentive." Officially, neither exams nor marks torment the pupils, each moving up a grade with the same playmates he has known since birth. Unofficially, the pundits of collective pedagogy are casting about for ways of curbing the insolence, laziness, and ignorance which mar their high school students. Pandemonium, or at best a hail of commentary on the teacher, enlivens the average class. The introduction of city teachers gave rise to more violent outbursts of rudeness, deplored at length in movement literature. More and more teaching staff must be imported, however, because the very tenor of kibbutz education estranges youth from an academic profession. Physical labor, preferably on wheels, is the end inculcated by every good-night tale, every poem lisped at a birthday tea. Although their high school curriculum is far more liberal than an agricultural future would warrant, no textbook talent can confer standing among the *hevra*: if a boy can plough a straight furrow, that wins recognition. Their farm work, increasing yearly until it occupies each afternoon, really began before kindergarten. Digging up a sand

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pit—"play" in the urban nursery vocabulary —was called "work." Later the toddlers graduated to miniature hoes in their own plot, and thence to the school garden. Unfortunately, praise from nanny for undertaking chores about the Childrens' House doesn't appear to inure the youth to domestic duties later.

Generalization will naturally seize on the triumphant average, glancing myopically at the misfit, the rebel, and the failure. All three exist, their titles interchangeable according to your viewpoint. The major unions run special schools for their maladjusted children, claiming that psychiatric troubles derive from a disturbed parental relationship, not from a defect in the collective system. "Look at our most difficult case, a boy who tried to commit suicide," argued a teacher in the Jordan Valley school. "His father 'changed rooms' when his mother was pregnant with a baby who stole all the attention once lavished on him. What d'you expect? Everyone agrees that our kids adore their parents because they don't have to share them—as they do their toys and nurses." True, even a lay observer can't help remarking that kibbutz infants resort to bed-wetting, thumb-sucking, and screaming much more than home-bred babies, and to a later age. They simply can't attract the nurse's attention otherwise, for she has too much on her hands.

Group nurture, instead of ironing out the differences between children, often accentuates them. In each group, you note the bully, the leader, the one who gets pushed around. And it looks as though the exceptionally weak or parent-unhappy compensate in manhood by deserting the prescribed pattern: they achieve academic laurels, or write a novel about disillusion and manure. This is betrayal indeed, for the movement still plays patron of culture on a Marxist handbook level. For May Day and Passover, the kibbutz artist will be expected to produce a fresco in the dining hall, while the kibbutz musician must turn out a cantata glorifying earth and sweat. Anyone completely dedicated to his art—thus violating the credo of toil—must feel guilty if he remains in the collective. Very few have managed to escape the lure of Dizengoff Boulevard, where ex-kibbutz culture drowns its remorse in espresso coffee. Not that individual collectives won't vote their writers and sculptors an hour off work, should they be considered worthy the honor; but it takes a large measure of selfish talent to rob the commune of precious manpower.

Rebels in another direction, toward family life, may compromise with idealism in a *moshav shitufi*: property is held in common, and work allocated centrally, but the women get a chance to run their own homes. The richer the village, the less time mothers have to spend on communal duty, and the bigger their quota of housekeeping money. "Anglo-Saxon" couples in particular have adopted this middle way, skating ever nearer the frontier of private enterprise. Indeed, some cooperatives have disintegrated because members skimped their communal job to run backyard poultry farms and hawk avocados grown on public fertilizer. Without a generous chunk of capital for initial investment, the *moshav shitufi* cannot find its feet; Mitzpe Ramon, for example, which began with a pile of blueprints and the most spectacular tract of wilderness in Israel, soon collapsed into a work colony maintained by the army. Although leaders of the *moshav shitufi* union (a restricted elite) predict that the collective empires will shrink in their favor, the kibbutz leaders deny any need to overhaul the system. Evolution, they contend in rather flatulent pamphlets, does not involve dissolution. That may be so, but every feminine plea for cash instead of austere garments issued by the wardrobe mistress betrays the Hegelian antithesis to be far under way.

KIBBUTZ education has succeeded too well in one way: by subduing ambition to the common weal, it has drugged initiative and made a generation most reluctant to leave their native compound for anything beyond the grand tour of European cathedrals and supermarkets, which every born

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Israeli must do before entering society. Thus each kibbutz union has constantly to exhort its members to found a new outpost of the Movement. Much to the annoyance of kibbutzim struggling with manpower shortage, it is their most conscientious comrades who answer the call.

Ein Gedi typifies such a *hevra*, all rooted in their homeland to the point of jingoism, and all under twenty-five. They cultivate an oasis by the simmering glazed Dead Sea. Diapers flutter impertinently beneath the crags, for a dozen babies have arrived in three years of settlement. No avant-garde experiment here—everyone is comfortably monogamous. The women have a kippered look and a long braid. Their conversation—telegraphic and always shouted—reminds one that the caterwauling in a kibbutz childrens' enclave usually prevented softer speech. At breakfast, Haydn roared full blast over the communal radio, vainly competing with the clang of aluminum jugs and brassy throats. The men, monosyllabic and grandly mustachioed (the craze for chin beards has gone), prove their education thorough, by toiling at 107.6° F., fifty-four hours a week. They take pride in nothing except a tomato crop out of season, or the fussy-leaved eggplant which makes a green frill on the immense rock rampart. No one bothers about keeping the compound tidy, although their "family" rooms are impeccable. In the dusty Culture Hut lie year-old Soviet journals. Occasionally, you may find the kibbutz intellectual playing chess there, alone. At night, the uncertain quavering of a cello meanders on the salt-caked shore; but both the musician and the intellectual avoid any stigma by hard work and the same boisterous muscularity as their comrades. No one has been taught to revere the God of Abraham; they are anti-clerical and, in the Israeli fashion, anti-Jewish.

Yet on Friday evening, red roses adorned the table from their own garden, and a girl demure as any *shtetl* matriarch, her braids tucked in a white kerchief, lit the Sabbath candles. She did not, of course, thank the Lord who had commanded us to kindle them. But someone recited a suitably pagan excerpt from the Song of Solomon, hymning the roses of Ein Gedi, and we all sat down with a fine religious appetite.

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YOM KIPPUR AND THE JEW OF TODAY

The Time of Renewal

DAVID BAUMGARDT

IS OUR prayerbook for the Day of Atonement, the *Mahzor* of Yom Kippur, a chance compilation of orisons? Or may we trace some intuitive design—however unobtrusive—in the order and structure of this remarkable set of devotional pieces? I wish to limit my own discussion of this question to a brief analysis of the Ashkenazic Mahzor as used, with minor variations, in Europe and America. I thus exclude other, different collections of Yom Kippur prayers, and I do not offer my views as dogmatically binding in any way, but merely as an attempt to discover some possible new meaning for us today in the Yom Kippur service.

Our post-Biblical literature is filled with "non-canonized" interpretations of ancient religious texts. In offering its own interpretation, the Zohar assures us that at least seventy different comments are possible on the Torah—a modest understatement, perhaps, when we consider the thousands of richly variegated commentaries on the Old Testament written by Jews and non-Jews alike. Why should we hesitate, then, to ponder on the meaning that our great religious documents may have for us today? Why should we narrow Jewish studies down to mere historical research, to questions of the origin of our literature? There is no reason why this or any other "scientific" critical approach need be the only legitimate one.

The German Protestant theologian Franz Delitzsch (father of Friedrich Delitzsch, the highly controversial Oriental scholar and author of *Babel und Bibel*) once called Yom Kippur the "Good Friday of Judaism." An upright student, lover and defender of our post-Biblical literature, Franz Delitzsch thought to pay us homage by this comparison of the Day of Atonement with the most solemn festival of Christendom; yet it must be said that the attempt at such a parallel is most misleading. Everything in the Yom Kippur liturgy breathes the spirit of the Old Testament; everything in the Good Friday ritual, the spirit of the Gospels and the Apostle Paul. We certainly must not blindly subscribe to Nietzsche's scornful characterization of the New Testament as exhaling an odor of the petty soul of a beadsman and his charge that it was a "sin against the spirit" to have bound together the Christian gospels with the Old Testament, that book of giant minds and passions. Yet to minimize the deep-seated differences in ethical and religious attitudes between the two books is equally impermissible.

Primarily, and this is to be seen most clearly in the Yom Kippur liturgy, the main strain of Jewish tradition has never admitted the belief in any mediator between man and his God. Paul placed in the center of Christian feeling the gospel that Jesus, the mediator, the God-man, died the most painful death on the cross to free all who believe in him from sin and condemnation. Judaism insists that man can free himself from the

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sense of guilt and from transgression only through direct confession to his God, and by the endeavor to "return" from his evil ways to the original state of innocence of the human soul. For, according to basic Jewish conviction, there is no original sin in the sense of man's inborn moral corruption.

The term *Teshubah,* which dominates all prayers for Yom Kippur, signifies penitence —or repentance only in a derivative sense; originally, it means simply "return," the going back to a point of departure. And this return is man's self-emancipation from his misdeeds through the start of a new and better way of life. "Hail, Israel, before whom dost thou purify thyself and who cleanses thee from sin? Thy Father in Heaven" (Yoma 85b). "Revert, revert from thy evil doings, House of Israel: why dost thou want to die? I, the Lord, do not delight in the death of the sinner but in his return from his misdeeds. Then I will put a new spirit within thee and will take the stony heart out of thee to give thee a heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 11:19; 18:30ff). These words by Rabbi Akiba and the prophet Ezekiel, especially the words of the prophet, which are repeated eight times during the day, are the great *leitmotifs* of the Yom Kippur service.

But, wisely, the liturgy by no means contains only prayers, supplications, calls for contrition and moral betterment. In the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the day, there are, remarkably, no prayers in the proper sense of the word. The most characteristic part, one may well say, the high point of the *Shaharith,* the morning service, consists of magnificent hymns which concentrate on a passionate glorification of the greatness of God and His universe. In the most powerful Biblical and Haggadic similes, in almost blinding images, the worshipper, his mind fresh in the prime of the day, is called upon to look up to the splendor of God's creation and His might. Again and again, especially in the numerous hymns which start with the call *"Ubekhen,"* and in the refrains, the *Rehitim* (ascribed to Kalonymus of Lucca), following the *Kedushah* (the prayer in praise of holiness), the overwhelming power of the one and only God is solemnized—the God whose throne is high above the clouds, unreachable, the radiant God who wraps Himself in light as in a garment and who has created the most threatening beast of prey, the Leviathan, as a mere plaything for his merriment. He who holds the weight of the world in His arm, before whom the pillars of the heavens tremble and in whose presence even the Seraphim, the highest ranking angels, have to cover their faces, He is the one who draws man from out of the womb. He is sanctified by myriads and feared in the lightning. He presides above the paeans of his adorers and sweeps along the heavens. The supernatural, purest beings, formed out of ice, snow, and flame, greet Him as the sanctified Holy One. "At his breath the mountains are rent, the valleys are cleaved asunder; they melt as wax." He alone suspends the world on nothingness.

These dithyrambic effusions prevail especially in the morning service, in the worshipper's freshness of emotion. Only in contrast to these hymns on the greatness of God is the smallness of man depicted. In comparison with God, man is "naught—vested in shame, clothed in ignominy," "worm and moth," "a fleeting whiff," "a withering leaf," "a soiled, dusty potsherd on the ground." Man in himself is mute. He does not even have the power of praying. It is only his Creator who can "open his mouth" and endow him with the gift of praise. And in the *Piyyut,* the poem "Taawat Nefesh," ascribed to Meshullam ben Kalonymus, we hear: "How can a mortal be pure and stainless before Thee, for even the hosts of heaven cannot stand clean before Thine eyes? [Compare Job 15:14f]. From his origin and his birth man is unclean, in life as in death. His days are void, his nights emptiness, his afflictions futile, as a dream at the hour of awakening."

The German poet Friedrich Hölderlin, friend of the philosophers Schelling and Hegel, analyzing the fervor of these "Orien-

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tal" ideas on God and man, aptly observed in his novel *Hyperion* that in the Orient the sky of a fierce luster forces down those who live under it like a despot; before man has learned to walk, he must kneel; before he has learned to talk, he must pray. Thus in one of the *Selihot* (prayers for forgiveness) in the "Adon Beshaftekha," during the later hours of the morning service, Elia bar Shemayah repeats the passionate accusation of the prophet Habakkuk (2:11): "The stone out of the wall" and "the beam out of the timber cry out thy crime." In one of the so-called *"Akedot"* (poems referring to the sacrifice of Isaac) written by Benjamin ben Serach in the 11th century, Abraham's merits, his complete submission to the will of God are invoked to assist his offspring; and in a bold mystic sense, Abraham's sanguinary sacrifice on Mount Moriah is compared to a joyful nuptial feast given by the father for the son.

The most specific moral and social demands of the Day of Atonement, however, are unfolded at the end of the morning service, in the *Haftarah,* the reading from Isaiah (58:5-8) where, paradoxically, we are informed on the very day of fasting that God has no interest in man's fasting as such. "Is this a fast such as I would choose," speaketh the Lord, "a day for a man . . . to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast . . . acceptable . . . to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens" of thy fellow man, "and to let the oppressed go free and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy healing shall spring forth speedily."

The *Musaf* service, which is an addition to the morning prayers (such supplements exist for the Sabbath and all festivals), follows the Shaharith and the readings from the Torah and Isaiah. This Musaf lasts for several hours in the afternoon and at its beginning seems hardly more than a further unfolding of the most significant themes of the Shaharith. The later prayers are perhaps even heightened in stateliness, solemnity, and ornateness, until a kind of calming finale to these rich adornments of vision and thought is reached in the following plain and stirring eulogy: "Thy hallowed name is near even to those far away. For Thee every heart longs. . . . The world pivots around Thy word. Thy people achieve perfection only through Thee and they call out: The Lord alone is our God! Those who are set as a seal upon Thy heart respond: the Lord is One and only One! Those whom Thou hast saved from their mother's womb respond: He alone is our God! Those who cling to Thee respond: there is no other God but Thee."

But the Musaf service does not exhaust itself simply in the elaboration of the sentiments of the Shaharith. The center of this second chapter of the Yom Kippur Mahzor is occupied by the recital of a completely different kind, the so-called *Abodah.* The Abodah is neither prayer nor hymn. It is an epic report of the Yom Kippur service in the ancient Palestinian Temple before its destruction by the Romans, in 70 C.E. The term Abodah itself means service. In the Shaharith—as generally in Jewish prayer—the individual worshipper has already identified himself with all the members of the congregation. In the Abodah, the full identification of the contemporary Jew with the past generations of his ancestors reaches back even to the ancient people of Israel. (In a similar vein, and going even further, the Passover Haggadah demands that in every generation each Jew regard himself as if he himself had been freed from the bondage of his ancestors in Egypt.) In the Musaf Abodah of Yom Kippur, the confession of sins once recanted by the High Priest in the Temple at Jerusalem is recited word for word by the *Hazan,* the reader, and immediately repeated by the congregation present as its own confession.

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The lapse of time is thus leaped over, and what was felt and said two thousand years ago is, literally, felt and said again by the Jew of this day. The deep and moving historical consciousness of an inmost continuity of national fate, possessed by many nations, can hardly reach a higher climax than is attained in the Passover Haggadah and in the Abodah of Yom Kippur. The proceedings of the ancient service in the Temple are narrated in every detail by the reader of the congregation; and at every point, the Jew of our day is supposed to live again through the grandeur, the strange archaisms, the deep, human humility revealed in the Yom Kippur rites of those distant days.

As the Abodah records, in the Temple of Jerusalem the preparations for the Yom Kippur started seven days before the festival. The High Priest went into seclusion one full week before the Day of Atonement. He was sprinkled with the water of atonement. The sages, the elders of the nation, joined him, asking him to study again the relevant ordinances of the Torah and their meaning. Toward sunset they offered him only a little food and all night young priests prevented him from falling asleep. When the watchman on the watchtower called out: "The dawn rises!" they spread a veil of byssus between the High Priest and the people. He bathed, slipped into his garments of gold, and performed the daily morning sacrifices. Then, on the Day of Atonement itself, the sacrificial bullock was placed between the entrance hall and the altar, its head toward the west . . . and the High Priest approached it, pressed both his hands upon its head, confessed his sins, without self-concealment. And thus he spoke: "Oh [great] Name! I have sinned, have been evil, and have lapsed before Thee, I and my house. By Thy [holy] name forgive the sin, the wickedness and evil by which I have sinned, have been wicked and evil before Thee, I and my house. As is written in the Torah of Moses, Thy servant, out of the mouth of Thy glory; 'for on this day He will blot out your sins to cleanse you for all your transgression before the Eternal.'" When the priests and the people standing in the court heard the awful and exalted name of the Lord, literally pronounced, coming from the mouth of the High Priest in sanctity and purity, they bent their knees, bowed their heads, and touched the ground with their faces, calling out: "Praise to the name of His glorious Kingdom, from eternity to eternity!"

Only on the Day of Atonement, and only by the High Priest, was the literal pronunciation of the Name of God permitted; on other occasions and, by all other persons, circumlocutions of the Name had to be used; and still today kneeling takes place in the Jewish ritual—if ever—only on Yom Kippur during the Abodah, and during the *Aleinu* prayer on Rosh Hashanah when kneeling is mentioned in the text of the liturgy. Three times the Tetragrammaton was pronounced by the High Priest in Jerusalem, in three confessions of enhanced intensity, first on behalf of the High Priest himself and his house, then for him, his house, and all the sons of Aaron, the first High Priest in Moses' time, and finally for the whole house of Israel—the confessions being interrupted by the rhythmic sprinkling and solemn counting of the sprinkling over the altar, over the cover of the Ark, and over the sacred curtain inside the Temple. When, however, the High Priest stepped out of the Holy of Holies, where he had remained hidden from the people, then his appearance was comparable to "the splendor of the morning star rising in the east." (Compare Leviticus 16; Talmud tractate Yoma; and the Piyyut *"Keohel Hanimtah."*)

DETAILS of the Abodah continue to appear in the Musaf Selihoth later on, but there they are mixed with entreaties for forbearance, and for the salvation of Israel and the restoration of Zion: as is said, for instance, at the beginning in the chain of the Musaf Selihoth: "Our God and God of our fathers, give back Thy glory to Thy devastated mountain seat, reappear, let the aura of Thy temple shine from afar, rebuild its chambers, cleanse them from all defilement, and

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lead the nations to Thy temple's light! Oh, guide them back, the lost tribes, call them, gather them by pipe, gather them by drum, bring them home up to Thy house, as has been written by the hand of Thy prophet: 'for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples [Isaiah 56:7].'"

Suddenly, however, all this hopeful longing and the dwelling on the memories of an unforgettable past are broken off with the commencing of the *Minhah* prayers, the late afternoon service. This marks the most trenchant change in tone within the whole liturgy: the transition from the expansive splendor in language and image of the Shaharith and the Musaf Abodah to the dramatically concise, terse, and much briefer Minhah, and then on to the final evening prayers, the Neilah.

Only in the Kedushah of the *Minhah Amidah* can there be traced a brief aftermath and some resemblance to the Shaharith hymns on the greatness of God's nature. In sharp contrast to all this, the Minhah reading from the Torah speaks in quite different terms, on a wholly dissimilar subject. The topic is incest (Leviticus 18:7 ff), referring to the most secretive—though comparatively rare—individual guilt of man down the ages. "Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father and mother . . . thy son's daughter and thy daughter's daughter . . . thy father's sister and thy mother's sister." Thou shalt not do this so "that the land vomit not ye out . . . when ye defile it." Thus the liturgy cuts into the darkest unconscious impulses of the individual.

Again, in a totally different way, individual guilt is touched upon in the Minhah Haftarah immediately following the reading of the Torah. At least as far back as the days of the Talmud (see Megillah 31b), the Book of Jonah was suggested as the most suitable for the late afternoon service of Yom Kippur. For, like the worshipper on Yom Kippur, the prophet Jonah had the hazardous intent to flee from God: from Teshubah in himself and from preaching Teshubah to the great city of Nineveh. Even after he has turned the citizens of Nineveh from their depravity, he remains in his habitual sullen temper. He prefers death to a new start in life, to that moral rebirth demanded by Yom Kippur. Only some trivial creature comfort can win him back to a fleeting satisfaction with life. When he wants to die because he has to suffer from the heat during his wandering on his great mission, God speaks to him ironically: Are you so unhappy on account of the heat? and Jonah confesses bluntly that this physical discomfort outweighs any gratification he feels from a great moral achievement. Only when God causes a tree to grow for him in the desert so that he can enjoy its shade, does his mood lift. He falls into dejection once more when the tree withers. Like the average man, like the ordinary run-of-the-mill Jew, Jonah always prefers sensual pleasantness to the fulfillment of a great ethical task. Until finally God asks the reluctant prophet, the man a prophet against his will, that crushing question, filled with inexhaustible symbolic meaning: "Thou hast pity on the *kikayon* tree for which thou hast not labored, neither madest it to grow, which sprung up as the child of a night and perished as the child of a night. And should I not pity Nineveh, the great city wherein are twelve times ten thousand men who cannot discern between right and left, and countless cattle?"

This, too, is the great question which Yom Kippur unrolls before every Jew: should the decisive spiritual "return" of the individual and of the masses be lost sight of in the yearning after the small passing physical comforts? Should the greatest moral aim be abandoned because of the lethargy and aimlessness of those who wish to escape?

In utmost contrast to such purposeless drifting, the martyrologies of the Minhah Selihoth point to the examples of the great Jewish martyrs of all times, who preferred the most cruel death to the desertion of their faith. The tortures they endured are enumerated in detail: "Like a doorstep they were stepped on." Like sacrifices "for the altar

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they were pushed on . . . the schoolchildren and the elders with their teachers. But they cried: 'We love our God unto death.' The flesh was torn from off the living body of Rabbi Akiba by multi-edged irons. . . . Rabbi Teradyon ben Hananya was thrown onto a heap of branches, the branches set afire, and wet wool laid on his heart to prolong his torment. The skin of Rabbi Ismael was slit off and when they reached the place on his forehead where the *tefillin* are fastened, he cried out in bitterness to the Creator of his soul: 'Is this the reward of the Torah? Thou who art wrapped in light, can Thy great awesome name be reviled by Thine enemy?' But a voice from heaven answered: 'If I hear one more objection, I shall pour out the world like water and reduce the earth back to nothingness. For this is my decree, and those who are engaged in the Law shall accept My judgment.' Fathers slaughtered, in full submissiveness, their sons, mothers offered up their babes."

Yet, in the Minhah service, as in the preceding prayers, martyrdom, asceticism, suffering, and contrition are never valued as ends in themselves. The final call always goes out for "the day of love and nearness to thy fellow man, the day of relinquishment of all envy and strife" (as, for example, the prayer *"Abal Awonoth"* following the Abodah).

In some of the Selihoth written at the time of the worst persecutions of Jews in the Middle Ages, during the Crusades, a thought of vengeance flares up. "O God, be not silent at the shedding of my blood, be not mute toward my adversaries! Demand my blood from the hands of my destroyers, let the earth not cover it up." Such rather subdued outcry is certainly no less justifiable than Martin Buber's challenge to a Nazi scholar in 1933, when Buber reminded him that the God who has punished Jews so often will not leave unopened the book in which the guilt of other nations is inscribed.

But high above any wish for vengeance, there shines the longing for the Day of Atonement between all men and nations, the Day of the Messiah, on which "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples." These immortal words of Isaiah are repeated in all *Tefilloth* of the day; and the Musaf service had already added: "Oh, lead all nations to the light of Thy restored Temple!" Perhaps the most moving expression is given to these thoughts in the prayer by Mordecai ben Shabtai: "Lord, at the decline of day, in the haunt of the fall of night, see how Thy people raise their eyes up to Thee and pray as Isaac once prayed in the fields at the close of day. Oh, heal their wounds, sprinkle them at sundown with the waters of cleanliness, wash them, scrub them at eventide. At the close of day, be like dew to Israel, that it open up and flourish like a rose! Look down at their fasting, their starving . . . seal them into the Book of Life! The day declines. The shadows of night fall. Thou Holy One, enthroned above all songs of praise, see how the whole people has been standing before Thee [in fasting] from morning till evening. At evening, morning, and noon we have prayed to Thee. Oh, give us soon a sign of the coming of that day known only to Thee, the day that is not day and not night, the day of the Messiah" (compare Zachariah 14:7, 9).

In this way, everything is prepared for the final crowning of the Day of Atonement, the Neilah, the prayer between day and night. There is no Neilah for any other day of the year—it was created only for Yom Kippur, and of all the sets of prayers of the day, the Neilah is of the greatest simplicity, concentration, and brevity. The *Al Het* confession, somewhat pedantically enumerating two sins for every letter of the alphabet, is now omitted, while it had been an essential part of the confession of sins, the *Viddui,* in the Shaharith, Musaf, and Minhah services. The Kedushah of the Neilah is as brief as on every Sabbath of the year and has far less of the glamor of the earlier praises of God's holiness.

But throughout the later Minhah and the whole Neilah the intensity of supplication steadily increases. "Lord, let my blood

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and fat which I have lost through fasting serve you for the fat and blood of the sacrifices [in the Temple of Jerusalem]. Subdue, blot out, our guilt and let it sink into the currents of the sea, into depths where it cannot be remembered, cannot be recalled nor rise again in all eternity!" "Lord, help us; for the waters reach out for our soul!"—"On my back the plowers draw long furrows" (Psalm 129:3). "From sea to sea were we tossed and drifted like storm-driven birds; and nowhere did we find balm for our wounds. . . . Lord, cut the thongs of the yoke off from Thy people's neck. And you, survivors of Israel, remnants of the tribes, circumcise your stony hearts. . . . 'Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people [Isaiah 57:14].' Straighten your crooked ways, fashion for yourselves a heart of purity. . . . Lord, remember us for life, King who desires that we live, seal us in the book of life for Thy sake, God of Life!"

In the Neilah we no longer hear the repeated appeals of the day to be inscribed in the book of life. The inscribing, it is now believed, has been completed. At the Neilah, it is the seal of God to His inscriptions which is at stake. Almost all the prayers are now repeated. Exhausted by the long fasting and the uninterrupted service, the reader recites the words slowly and the congregation repeats them slowly, distinctly, and anxiously. All the angels are supposed to thrust forward to God's throne. They are asked to plead for us, even though "no angel is pure enough before Thee." The day turns to dusk; the shadows lengthen: "O open Thy gates to us at the hour of closing! The sun is setting; we come to Thy doors. Lord, forgive us"—and now the calls for forbearance surge up even more—"Lord, pardon us, have mercy on us, exonerate, exculpate, redeem us, condone and spare us, be not stern, harsh, and hard upon us; relent and wipe out our guilt! For not in self-assuredness and not in confidence in the justice of our cause do we put our requests before Thee, but only trusting in Thy great compassion and commiseration. . . . Lord, harken unto us, comply with our entreaty! No longer hesitate, for Thy sake. For by Thy Name is named Thy city and Thy people. See, like the clay in the hand of the potter—to his liking he pulls it, to his liking he compresses it—thus we are in Thy hand, Lord [compare Jeremiah 18]. O look down on Thy covenant with us and not on our evil impulse. . . . Shepherd of Israel, bend down Thine ear from on high, answer us, respond, O Lord! Only on Thee do we lean . . . unto Thee do we cleave . . . let us remain Thine own."

Then, for the eighth time—starting with the folktune-like verses calming the tensions of the worshippers—the general confession of sin is repeated. "Verily, we are Thy servants, Thou art our master. . . . We are Thy children, Thou art our father. We are Thy flock, Thou art our shepherd. We are Thy vineyard, Thou art our keeper. We are Thy beloved ones, Thou art our lover." "Our God, and God of our fathers, let our prayer come before Thee and withdraw not from our entreaties! For we are not so arrogant of face and so stiff of neck that we would say before Thee: we have been righteous and we have not sinned; no, truly, we have sinned; we are guilty" (Samson Raphael Hirsch, the renowned Orthodox rabbi of Frankfort on the Main, in a comment about a hundred years ago pointed out that this word "guilt" in Hebrew means "deserving complete devastation of the mind, total loss of happiness"), "we duped and scorned, ridiculed and rebelled, we erred and we deluded others. But Thou art just in all that has come upon us. For Thou hast acted in truth, but we acted in malice. . . . Who are we? What is our life? What is our goodness, what our righteousness and the help we can lend? What is our power? What can we say before Thee?. . . . Are not all the heroes like naught before Thy brow and the men of renown as if they had never lived, and the sages without insight, and the wise men without discernment? For the fullness of their deeds is futility, and the days of their life are chaff and trash before Thee. . . . But today help us, strengthen us!"

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FINALLY, however, at the end of the ten to twelve hours of continuous service—after the last *Abinu Malkenu* and its supplications—all requests and prayers stop. At the end of the long sequel of orisons, there follows simply a threefold repetition of the words with which countless Jewish martyrs have stood torture and death: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One! Praised be the name of His glorious kingdom forever." This confession of faith, thrice made, is fortified by the repetition several times of that call with which the converted nation once turned to the prophet Elijah on Mount Carmel, after he had unveiled before the king of Israel the impotence of all the pagan priests of Baal. Seven times the reader and the congregation call out: "The Lord alone, He alone is God!" No word is spoken after that, the call is followed by a single blast on the shofar, the ancient horn which was used to awaken the people in the desert and afterwards in their homeland to the contemplation of grave national or moral decisions.

To the contemporary Jew, without historical consciousness, the preserving of monotheistic faith may sound like a meaningless truism. In the course of the centuries, however, the opponents of this monotheistic religion have never ceased to fear it as the bulwark of the most radical moral and religious enlightenment. In the ageless struggle against pagan superstition, primitive sensualism, and moral and religious disintegration, monotheism, in truth, was the great standard bearer of an abstract higher intellectual and moral insight. We, therefore, might do well not to forget that we are the heirs of that great religious and moral faith for which our ancestors once paid the highest price, and gave their lives.

Ancient Greece vastly excelled Israel in acuteness of thought, in works of art of a unique harmony and nearness to nature. Rome became politically far superior, by the discipline of its military organization and the efficiency of its jurisprudence and civic administration. But no other nation has ever equaled the vehemence and force, the fervor and depth of the moral and religious life of ancient Judaism.

As for everything in life and history, a price had to be paid for these achievements. Especially in the 17th century, probably the least fertile epoch in Jewish history, the all-embracing, all-penetrating strength and severity of moral and religious feeling led to excesses in rigorism and, unfortunately, to overemphasized ritualism. In Christianity, the great daughter religion of Judaism inspired by Paul, the moral vigor of Jewish thought often led on even to dangerous asceticism, among monks and nuns, to a kind of sick self-hatred and blind self-torture. But the eye of the historian of the Judeo-Christian tradition, and our eye, ought not therefore to be obscured to the greatness of Judaism, and of one of its notable achievements, not, I think, a minor one: the prayerbook of the Day of Atonement.

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GREENWICH VILLAGE CHALLENGES TAMMANY

Ethnic Politics and the New Reformers

DAN WAKEFIELD

GREENWICH VILLAGE and Tammany Hall are among the few social institutions still standing on our flat, gray, affluent landscape which lend themselves at all to romanticism. The Village and Tammany alike have been largely obscured by legend, and their not-so-romantic reality is rarely revealed. It recently was, for both of them at once—as an odd and unintended by-product of the Democratic primary elections in New York City this September, when a wave of mostly amateur politicians shook the sagging walls of Tammany and came close to toppling Carmine De Sapio, master of the Hall, from his key perch as district leader in Greenwich Village's First Assembly District South. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the close-up view the campaign presented of the Village and Tammany was how much they both have changed. The wild old Village has reached respectable middle age; tough old Tammany is fast approaching respectable senility.

Before plunging into the battle, it will help to define some terms. One of the confusing aspects of any political campaign—especially one which involves a reform movement—is that both of the rivals claim, with impressive documentation and pious fervor, to be fighting for "the people." As Carmine De Sapio sagely remarked in a typical line from one of his Village campaign talks (which, incidentally, sounded as if they might have been ghost-written by Dwight D. Eisenhower), "politics is people." The title of his 25-page campaign brochure was "The People Themselves," a phrase lifted with due acknowledgment from a statement by Thomas Jefferson (identified for any new citizen just off the boat as "one of the Founding Fathers of our nation") asserting that "I know of no safe depository of the ultimate power of society but the people themselves. . . ." Without going into the merits of Jefferson's notion, let us quickly affirm that the high, stated purpose of the insurgent Village Independent Democrats was to eliminate the "bossism" of Tammany Hall and restore politics to "the people." Since both Mr. De Sapio and his rival, thirty-eight-year-old corporation lawyer Charles McGuinness, claimed to be waging their campaign for "the people," an innocent observer might justifiably turn to the dictionary and look up the definition of "people." My own trusted source, Harper's American College Dictionary, defines the word as: "The whole body of persons constituting a community, a tribe, race, or nation." Of course—there was the dilemma! The community in question, Greenwich Village, is principally composed of two different tribes. De Sapio represented one of them, McGuinness the other.

De Sapio's tribe is mainly composed of Americans of Italian extraction. They have changed not so much in their habits and outlook as in their numbers: in the 20's, they were estimated to make up about half the population of Greenwich Village; today, according to the estimates of their political rivals, they have dwindled to about a third of the Village population. The other tribe—composed of people like myself, who have

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come to New York and the Village not from Italy, but America's own remote provinces (distant, dark places such as Indiana and Oklahoma), have changed not only in their numbers, which are growing, but in their average age, habits, occupations, and outlooks. Because of the continual rise of apartment buildings whose rents are as high as their penthouse towers, and the rise of rents in the shabbier (or "atmospheric") old apartments as well, few artists or bohemians who even have flirted with starvation can afford to live here. A large number have moved across town to the tenements of the Lower East Side,* and come into the Village restaurants and bars at night or on the weekend, much as Kansas farmers come to town. But a growing number of the real residents hold down regular jobs (most often in what is now called "Communications," a category covering such various occupations as Doubleday secretary, BBD&O account exec, and usher at Rockefeller Center), have husbands, wives, babies, and grocery carts. The main distinction in material possessions between them and the older Italian residents is that they have hi-fi instead of television sets. In the afternoon, they buy the *Post* instead of the *Journal-American,* and are likely to wear toreador pants or slacks instead of skirts and dresses when they wheel their babies into Washington Square Park. Many of them spent the protest years of their youth here, and when they closed that chapter with marriage, decided to stay on. Others have moved in from less pleasant parts of town (almost every other part of town is less pleasant), discovering that the Village is one of the few places in New York where you can walk around without feeling rushed, and found themselves a bright new, or atmospheric old, apartment.

The existence of these two distinct tribes in the Village is nothing new—they were discussed by Caroline Ware in her book *Greenwich Village, 1920-1930* and identified as the "Local People" (Italians) and the "Villagers" (the people from the provinces). The new factor is the change on the part of the provincial tribe from a nomadic, rootless residence to a more stable, middle-class and middle-aged, family- and community-conscious life. Unlike the old bohemians, they are the kind of people who want to be active in the PTA, and, if possible, local politics. They are the people who largely make up the Village Independent Democrats.

It is still the fearful illusion of the local people, however, as evidenced throughout the recent campaign, that these "newcomers" (that was De Sapio's label for the VID people) are wild bohemians and threaten hearth and home with customs born of Freudianism and Marxism. In the election-eve street meeting for De Sapio which someone unhappily described on advance posters as a "Monster Rally," these sentiments were in constant evidence. The rally was held in Father Demo Square, which is, as almost every speaker dramatically and significantly noted, "in the shadow of this great church, Our Lady of Pompeii." A middle-aged Dixieland group struck up "When the Saints Come Marching In" as the De Sapio motorcade approached the square. The teen-age Italian girls danced with each other in the street (they are, in their attire, indistinguishable from the coffeehouse "beats" except for the added elements of lipstick and bubble gum), while the old ladies screeched and clapped as a parade of citizens testified to De Sapio's fine qualities and referred to the opposition, at various times, as "sinister," "no-gooders," and "an invasion of strange forces interested only in rule or ruin." A stranger innocently wandering by might have thought he had stumbled onto an anti-Communist rally in Laos.

Most of the local people seemed to share the view of the New York *Mirror's* daily novelist, Lee Mortimer, who wrote that De Sapio's opposition was composed of "Village Commies, lefties, eggheads, and beatniks." One of the basic illusions about the Village, shared by Lee Mortimer and most tourists, is

*See "New York's Lower East Side Today" in the June 1959 COMMENTARY.

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that the beat-attired people on display at coffee shops like Rienzi's and bars like the Riviera actually live in the Village. The truth is that most of them are commuters. Any night about three o'clock, at the West Fourth Street stop of the Independent subway, you will see great numbers of girls with long, dirty hair and guys with beards get out their tokens, put on their sandals, buy the *Times*, and go back to Brooklyn, the Bronx, or West End Avenue. This summer a contest was held at one of the local coffee shops to elect "Miss Beatnik," and the espresso crowd was outraged when it turned out they had voted the crown to a showgirl from midtown. They quickly held another election and this time put in one of their own. She was a seventeen-year-old high school girl from Brooklyn, her last name withheld, no doubt to insure against any severance of her allowance due to parental wrath (the allowance now buys espresso and eye make-up, rather than lipstick and ice cream sodas).

The currency of the "beatnik" illusion was so great, however, that the community's oldest newspaper, the *Villager*, ran an editorial on the campaign entitled "Boss vs. Beatnik?" It soberly decided that such labels missed the mark of the two opponents who were, in reality, better typed by the labels "moderate" and "liberal." One local newspaperman who had followed the campaign and was personally in favor of the VID, remarked that "Maybe calling McGuinness a beatnik isn't so bad after all—at least that makes him *something*. It's hard to tell if he's *anything*." McGuinness, indeed, is by appearance, a singularly bloodless and indistinguishable man. At one of the VID campaign cocktail parties a guest asked a club member, "Who's McGuinness?" "The one," the member pointed, "in the television-blue shirt." That seemed as apt as anything else. We have to take it on the promise of his platform that he is against patronage, evil, and bossism and in favor of clean government and democratic rule. Whatever else he may be, he is no more of a beatnik than is Ezra Taft Benson.

And what of the label of "Boss" for De Sapio? We are all familiar with the rash of stories several years ago which praised him on the covers of *Harper's* and *Time* magazine as "a new kind of Tammany leader"—more enlightened, more liberal, more honest, more sensitive to the public pulse. *Harper's* said in 1956 that "De Sapio has instituted a real measure of reform for which the citizens of New York can be truly grateful." *Time* sang out that "Where the old Tammany used to pass around food baskets, De Sapio's Tammany makes public-minded donations to blood banks. Where the old bosses packed city hall with hoodlums and hacks, De Sapio helps to find good men. . . ." The city papers were equally ecstatic, praising him for twenty-six civic reforms, including election laws and the policy of submitting the names of judicial candidates for approval by the Bar Association. This January the *Times* editorialized that De Sapio was "a shining example of political enlightenment, as Tammany leader, compared with some other Tammany bosses in the past." How could liberals argue with endorsements like that?

Their disillusionment sprang not so much from his "government" record as it did from strictly political differences. The first difference to arise was over the feeble exertions De Sapio made on behalf of Stevenson in the 1956 Presidential campaign, after his boy Harriman failed to get the Democratic nomination. It was this, in fact, which resulted in the formation of the Village Stevenson Club—which became the Village Independent Democrats. They got considerable support this year from other party liberals, headed by the "Old Turk" trio of Mrs. Roosevelt, Thomas Finletter, and Herbert Lehman, who openly broke with De Sapio last year after he pushed through Frank Hogan over Finletter as the Democratic candidate for the Senate.

Although born of the liberal disillusionment over Tammany in the Stevenson campaign, once established, the Village Independent Democrats began to pay increasing attention to local irritations, based on

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the Italian-oldtimer rule of Village politics. A typical example of VID conversion is that of its 1957 candidate against De Sapio, Herman Greitzer. Greitzer had first joined the Tamawa Club (Tammany's Village local), but when he found that his wife was relegated to a sort of bean-supper-serving status in the club along with all the other women, who (probably more from social than political reasons) are relegated to a kind of ladies' auxiliary, he and his wife joined the VID. The De Sapio forces just don't understand the type of modern-woman-in-politics view that is part of the newcomers' code. One young lady who worked as a poll watcher in the 1957 contest was asked with honest curiosity by one of the Tamawa watchers (male, of course) at the polling place, "What's a nice girl like you doing in a place like this?"

During the current campaign I asked this particular girl a basic question myself: Why are you working for the VID against De Sapio? She named with accuracy and full knowledge the reports of Tammany patronage (a VID ad in the local papers before the election named names and salaries of Tamawa club patronage amounting to $273,325 a year), the inferior role of women in the Tamawa club, the De Sapio lack of enthusiasm for people like Stevenson and Finletter, and then said the club wasn't really serving the local people with such things as legal and rent clinics. I pointed out that they did, indeed, have such services, and after a moment the girl said, "Yes, but I really wouldn't feel I could take my own problems to them."

No—any more than an aged Italian widow would feel easy about taking her problems to the bright young hinterlanders of the VID. It is the same reason that the Puerto Ricans in East Harlem don't often take their problems to the local city councilman, John Merli. He and his club are Italians. We belong to different tribes, and trust our own.

The Italians understand this, but their confusion about the VID, especially at the outset, was that they didn't recognize the tribe. When the VID ran Herman Greitzer, a Jew, as their candidate for district leader in 1957, some of the Tamawa oldtimers felt they saw the light—the VID was a Jewish club. But now along came 1959 and they ran a man named McGuinness! The VID is a tribe, indeed, but one not familiar to Italians who have lived most of their life in New York. It is the boys from the provinces—or, as De Sapio has expressed it, "newcomers"—and McGuinness is one of the few exceptions who was born in New York. His candidate for co-leader, Gwendolyn Worth, is from Mississippi; the VID president, the Reverend Howard Moody, is from Texas; campaign manager Ted Meyers is from New Jersey. They are also, for the most part, members of an oppressed minority group in all our great cities which one social worker at a New York Intergroup Relations Conference once referred to as "the disenfranchised white middle class."

THE wave of reform opposition that accounted for three of the six knockdowns (the other three were the doing of Congressman Adam Clayton Powell in Harlem) of Tammany district leaders in September's primary can, in large part, be looked at as an upsurge of this same new minority group throughout the city. Part of Tammany's difficulty with them lies in their lack of understanding of them. The minority groups which, like the Italians, came here from Europe were a different matter. De Sapio himself came to power in the Village in 1943 by finally ousting the Irish leader, Dan Finn, whom he beat three times at the polls before he was finally seated by the Irish-dominated Tammany organization. When after one of his prizeless victories De Sapio, then the "reform" candidate, and some of his cohorts picketed Finn's office, the Irish leader said the performance was "in line with all the other tactics they've been using. I might even say it smells strongly of Communism."

Some things don't change. The insurgents are always the reformers, and the opposition always suspects that they are tinged with

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Communism. The complaint of the young Midwestern worker in the VID that he couldn't get anywhere in the Tamawa club "if he tried" recalled a statement of De Sapio that when men like Finn were in command "the Irish leaders used to give the Italians important-sounding jobs—without power...."

THE great difference is that this new minority group doesn't want the same prizes as the others did—except, of course, the basic one of "getting in." They don't want patronage and bread-baskets and turkeys at Christmas. They want the more elusive and difficult rewards of leadership, participation, and liberal reform. De Sapio, of course, has altered his own role as Tammany boss and the role of Tammany Hall to meet this new trend—as was mentioned before, he has introduced such forward-looking practices as "public-minded donations to blood banks" and more political reforms than any past Tammany leader would have dreamed of. In the Village itself he is weighted down with civic accomplishments, from a De Sapio scholarship donated to the Village Outdoor Art show to the chairmanship of the annual dinner of the local Catholic War Veterans, and was named "Man of the Year" by the Village Chamber of Commerce. As Mencken said of Teddy Roosevelt, "one does what one can." De Sapio is so modern a political leader that he even wears facial makeup, of a tint almost exactly like the kind Billy Graham wears. But there are two things he can't do. He can't take off his dark glasses, that symbol of the evil boss, because he suffers from an eye disease known as iritis. And he can't eliminate patronage—the rock upon which the church of Tammany is founded.

Ironically enough, the newly apparent weakness of Tammany beyond the Village, in the city at large, may not be due to the failure of De Sapio to make his organization more modern and liberal, but his failure to keep it carrying out its oldtime functions. As *Time* aptly described the rise of Tammany through its help for the new European minority groups in the city: "Tammany fed them, led them, got them housing, found them jobs—and used their votes to sustain itself in power." Tammany couldn't have played this role for the newcomers from the American provinces, the college graduate liberals who compose the heart of the VID. But it could have done it with the great minority group migrations that have poured into New York City in our own time, especially since the end of World War II—the migrations of Negroes and Puerto Ricans. There are 350,000 Negroes in Harlem alone, and there are 650,000 Puerto Ricans in the five boroughs of the city. With these key, and still growing groups, Tammany has goofed, and it is too late to do anything about it.

Half of the six toppled Tammany leaders in the recent primaries were knocked off in Harlem by Adam Clayton Powell's troops, and it was not merely Powell's own feud with De Sapio that led to the overthrow. Harlem City Councilman Earl Brown, who ran against Powell in the Democratic primary last year, said once that his defeat was not so much due to pro-Powell sentiment as anti-Tammany sentiment. One bitter Negro Tammany official said privately: "You know why Tammany is dead in Harlem? Because it doesn't do anything for anyone at any time or at any place."

The same can be said in respect to Tammany and the Puerto Ricans, and with this group more than any other, Tammany might have performed a great service to the city as well as to itself by carrying out its traditional role of aid and recruitment of the newcomers. As Caroline Ware wrote of the immigrant groups in the Village of the 20's, "in a real sense the political clubs served the community better and more to the community's satisfaction than did the regular welfare agencies because the political club was trusted and respected where the welfare agency was not."

The same can be said of the experience of the Puerto Ricans with the one political club in East Harlem that served them in the old "Tammany-style" way—the Vito Marcantonio club. In that neighbor-

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hood Marcantonio is still a legend, and he, too, was "trusted and respected where the welfare agency was not."

The Puerto Rican Tammany leader in East Harlem, installed by De Sapio in 1954 (after more than thirty years of Puerto Rican settlement in the neighborhood), is neither respected, beloved, or feared by the people of his district. Tammany sent Puerto Ricans to the state assembly in 1953 and 1958, and has named a Puerto Rican city magistrate. But it has never gone out and aided and recruited the people as it did with the European immigrants.

THE only New York politician who seems to realize the real potential of the Negroes and Puerto Ricans is Adam Clayton Powell, who early this year organized a "leadership council" which was the first group to bring together Negro and Puerto Rican leaders from all over the city into one body. If he does anything with this group politically, the cry of "demagogue" will rise first and loudest from the lips of those people who were sitting on their hands while Powell was organizing these people. If he wins them it will be first of all because nobody else bothered to invite them in.

Powell is shunned by the new liberal reform movement that the VID is affiliated with, which carried on the sixteen fights against Tammany district leaders outside of Harlem. (Powell fought four and won three in Harlem.) I happened to be at the VID headquarters one afternoon when Powell dropped in, and as soon as he left, one of their workers rushed up to assure me that their group was in no way affiliated with Powell's battle against Tammany.

Whether or not the new reformers ever join ranks with Powell (which seems, at the least, unlikely), they are not, any more than Tammany Hall, going to make any lasting mark on city-wide politics if they don't win the support of the city's largest potential voting bloc: the Negroes and Puerto Ricans. The Village is probably the only place in the city where the minority group of white middle-class liberals hold anything like a plurality. I am sure that Negroes and Puerto Ricans would be welcomed by any of these new reform groups—but they are going to have to do more than just put a welcome mat outside the door to bring them inside.

De Sapio barely won this round in the Village, squeaking by the VID in a count of 4,857 to 4,271, in the largest primary turnout in the community's history. His own people were solidly behind him, and the heavily Italian election districts in the south Village piled up big majorities, but McGuinness won a larger number of election districts and cut the Tammany margin in almost every district. On election night the Tamawa captains coming in with the returns, shaking their heads, so often complained that it was "that new apartment house on the block" that hurt the total. The scene is changing and the pressure is on—not only in the new Greenwich Village, but the new New York City, and Tammany Hall has never looked so old.

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FREEDOM, VIRTUE, AND THE NEW SCHOLASTICISM

The Supreme Court as Philosopher-Kings

DAVID SPITZ

ONCE again, as in the days of the New Deal, the Supreme Court is the center of a vigorous national debate. But the issues now are different from those which agitated the country two decades ago, and the participants have by and large reversed their roles. Then it was the liberals who led the attack against the Court, arguing that a tribunal vested with the power of judicial review was essentially undemocratic, for thus public opinion could be overridden by a body of men neither elected by nor responsible to it; that the Court was acting as a legislative as well as a judicial body, making as well as declaring law; and that it had generally used this legislative power in a reactionary way, to protect "property rights" rather than "human rights." Now, however, it is the conservatives who are primarily discomfited, because the controversial issues before the Court, as Alan Westin has shown,* no longer concern matters of property but civil liberties and civil rights. The conservatives now argue that the Court, allegedly in the control of liberal Justices, is so concerned to protect individual liberties and civil rights that it neglects important dangers to our national security, such as Communist subversion, and also that it has impaired states' rights in such areas as segregation.

But it is not only conservatives who are criticizing the Supreme Court today. Such a liberal as Professor Herbert Wechsler of Columbia Law School, for example, has been troubled by the theory which the Court evolved to justify its rulings in the desegregation cases. Other liberals feel that the Court stood on firmer ground in civil liberties cases when it avoided judging substantive questions and, instead, secured the release of defendants merely by insisting on the observance of the rules of fair procedure. Still other liberals—including Dean Erwin Griswold and Professor Paul Freund of Harvard Law School—declare that the Court's work in recent years has been marked by a very serious decline in judicial craftmanship.

Taken together, these criticisms constitute a formidable indictment; and the Court may not escape unscathed from the attempts now being made in Congress and elsewhere to limit its powers and correct its "erroneous" decisions. Whatever the results of this battle, however, what seems least likely is an attempt to overcome what Professor Walter Berns of Cornell holds to be the Court's most serious dereliction of duty: its failure to promote "virtue."

In his book, *Freedom, Virtue, and the First Amendment* (Louisiana State University Press, 264 pp., $4.00), Berns argues that it is justice, rather than freedom, which is "the central political virtue." The Court's primary business is to mold men's characters, to educate the citizens, by interpreting the Constitution and the laws in such a manner as to make them conform to the canons of "natural justice." It is sheer foolishness, Berns maintains, to pretend that judges can secure justice by applying the standards of the Constitution or statutory law. They (and

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*See "Liberals and the Supreme Court," in the July 1956 COMMENTARY.

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we) must first repudiate all modern, and especially liberal, notions about the nature of freedom; for such notions represent a defection from the great truths of classical political philosophy. The function of law is to direct the inner life of man so as to produce right conduct; and only if the Court's love of virtue surpasses its love of freedom, Berns says, can we hope to achieve a just society.

This conception of law, freedom, and the work of the Court has had little impact on the legal profession or on political practice. Nevertheless, Berns is significant—not as an interesting if isolated critic of American constitutional law, but rather as a representative of the neo-conservative and anti-liberal camp typified by such otherwise disparate figures as Leo Strauss and Walter Lippmann, Eric Voegelin and John Hallowell, Bertrand de Jouvenel and, in lesser degree, Hannah Arendt.

What unites these very different thinkers is a deep suspicion of most liberal assumptions. Berns is, strictly speaking, a member of Professor Strauss's particular school of natural-right philosophy; yet his attack on the Supreme Court, which he views as an instrument of liberal politics, becomes meaningful only in the context of the much broader assault on modern liberalism. Here, as it were, is a case study of the rather vague and unworldly neo-conservative philosophy being applied to a definite, limited area of public life, the "new" scholasticism employed to judge current political issues.

THE neo-conservative indictment is essentially a repudiation of one of the major assumptions of liberal thought—namely, the belief that the ordinary man is sufficiently intelligent and informed to be an able judge of his own best interests. The truth is, however, that man is part of the natural order of things; he occupies a place appropriate to his nature and must perform those duties necessary to maintain that system of order. Liberalism's mistaken view of the nature of man in society, argue the neo-conservatives, leads to two major fallacies: freedom rather than virtue, rights rather than duties, becomes the ultimate political value; and the rule of wise men is subordinated to that of public sentiment. As a result, in a democracy philosophy becomes the slave of public opinion when it should be its master. Most of the disasters of recent decades—or indeed centuries—can be traced to this condition, the neo-conservatives argue.

Although neo-conservatives generally use the words "liberal" and "freedom" in a disdainful and pejorative sense, they do not reject these terms entirely but sometimes invest them with quite different meanings. Thus Leo Strauss, in an article in the *Review of Metaphysics* (March 1959), distinguishes between classical or "true" liberalism, on the one hand, and modern or "perverted liberalism," on the other. "Originally," he writes, "a liberal was a man who behaves in a manner becoming a free man as distinguished from a slave." But how does a free man behave? He is respectful of and submissive to authority; he does not, like "perverted" liberals, forget "quality, excellence, or virtue."

Similarly, when Professor Hallowell praises freedom, he does not mean freedom as the absence of restraints, the freedom to do what one wants; rather he means "true freedom" or rational choice, which "requires both knowledge of the good and the will to choose the good when known" (*The Moral Foundation of Democracy*). Such knowledge, Hallowell emphasizes, derives not from man but from God. Freedom, therefore, is a choice which accords with God's will; for a secular theorist like Strauss, a choice which accords with the dictates of natural right. For neither writer does freedom involve a choice to act "wrongly." Thus, in somewhat Orwellian fashion, restraint becomes freedom; for freedom is now defined not as doing what you want to do (or *think* you want to do), but what you ought to do, what God (or nature) commands you to do, and what, indeed, you would do if you could apprehend the truth.

All this, of course, implies the existence

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of a body of absolute truth. And, indeed, the neo-conservatives, whether of a natural-law (religious) or a natural-right (secular) orientation, all appeal to moral principles which are external to any political or legal principle and which are deemed to possess a higher validity. By natural law or natural right, they have in mind a conception of rights and duties which are derived from and which express the principles of human nature itself. There is, they hold, a rational order in which all natural beings, including man, have a fixed and ascertainable end. This natural order exists only to be discovered, and when discovered to be obeyed. In Strauss's words: "All natural beings have a natural end, a natural destiny, which determines what kind of operation is good for them. In the case of man, reason is required for discerning these operations: reason determines what is by nature right with ultimate regard to man's natural end" *(Natural Right and History).*

The contention that nature is indeed rational (rather than essentially chaotic) is not, however, a self-evident truth. If it is to be more than what Walter Lippmann, in *The Public Philosophy,* calls a "necessary assumption," the truth of nature's rationality must be established by the same objective standard, by the very principle of reason, to which natural-right philosophers otherwise appeal; in other words, the assumption that there is a rational order must itself be sustained by reason. But it is precisely on this point that theological and secular neo-conservatives divide. The former contend that it is impossible to prove any explanation of the universe without invoking an objective reality that is outside that system, i.e., God. The latter assert that the very principle which explains the universe, reason, constitutes the objective proof of its rationality. The theological argument is a direct appeal to faith. The argument of the secular natural-right philosophers is rather circular, but it also appeals, ultimately, to an alternative faith.

Lippmann, while he admits the need for the demonstration of the existence of the rational order, is likewise compelled to admit, with Strauss, that its principles cannot be verified empirically. He seeks instead "to repair the capacity to believe," and asserts with respect to these principles that "we have to believe in them." Obviously, an appeal to man's will to believe is not a very convincing demonstration of the truth of what is believed.

Attempting to circumvent this difficulty, Lippmann and Strauss invoke the authority of the "rational" and "decent" man. Such men, Lippmann holds, can have no doubts about the validity of the principles of natural law. "They are the laws of a rational order of human society—in the sense that all men, *when they are sincerely and lucidly rational,* will regard them as self-evident. . . . They are the terms of the widest consensus *of rational men* in a plural society. They are the propositions to which all men concerned, *if they are sincerely and lucidly rational,* can be expected to converge. . . . The highest laws are those upon which *all rational men of good will, when fully informed,* will tend to agree" (my italics). This, unfortunately, tells us little about the content of these highest laws. It also begs the very point at issue, namely, what is the test of the rational and decent man? Apparently he is one who is able to perceive the principles of the rational order—another circular argument.

WHEN neo-conservatives indict liberalism for its philosophical relativism, for holding value statements to be matters of preference rather than of scientific proof, so that it cannot say with any objective certainty whether anything is good or bad; or when they attack liberalism's failure to apprehend and build a political order on the "true" principle of aristocracy, hierarchy, and degree, they imply that their own judgments rest on established metaphysical truths. Yet how established are these "truths" when Strauss, for example, rejects God, Voegelin and Hallowell embrace him (so long as he is the Christian God), and Lippmann tries to bring the two factions together under a com-

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mon umbrella labeled the "traditions of civility" or the "public philosophy"?

When neo-conservatives assert that government should be entrusted to the superior group of "rational and decent men," they imply that there is a body of such men who can readily be recognized. Yet, theorists of aristocracy have always been at loggerheads over the question of who are, politically, the best men. Intellect, wealth, strength, race—these are but a few of the qualities that have been suggested as criteria for defining the best. But nobody has yet demonstrated the connection between any of these "virtues" and effective political leadership. And even if it were possible to decide who the best men are, there is still the question of how they shall be put in power, and how removed if they cease to be best. One can only sigh over the answer Salvador de Madariaga gives to such questions:

"No one appoints, elects, or chooses the aristocrat. He knows himself to be one because he hears himself called to his high and arduous endeavor by an internal voice —his vocation. There is no voice with more commanding power; none which can obtain more punctual and loyal obedience. Chief and soldier within one soul, under one will, within the same executive body, the aristocrat obeys his vocation without any possible excuse or evasion. He is his own slave. . . . He is his own police, judge, and executioner" (*Anarchy or Hierarchy*).

The difficulties here are all too patent. Who is to decide between the claims of competing "aristocrats"? What if the aristocrat does wrong (as aristocrats have been known to do), but refuses to arrest, imprison, or execute himself? We cannot look to another aristocrat for the remedy, because by the logic of this construction only the aristocrat can judge himself. Yet the most cursory reading of history reveals that responsibility only to oneself, when combined with power over others, is not a sufficient brake on man's capacity to act unjustly toward other men.

This is why liberals, as John Stuart Mill argued in his *Representative Government*, look primarily to public opinion to prevent misgovernment. The ordinary man may not be the best judge of particular legislative enactments, but he can tell whether those who govern treat him badly or well. In the democratic state, all that is desired is that the ordinary man express his broad preferences and dislikes, that he announce whether the political shoe pinches or fits. He does this by deciding who is to govern. Through his periodic answers to this question, he also decides the question: to what general ends?

In the democratic state, philosophers (and theologians) are free to persuade public opinion to accept their findings; but since there are competing philosophies and theologies, democracy refuses, very properly, to surrender political control to a single "true" philosophy or faith. Instead, it compels them all to compete, to expose their teachings to adverse criticism, and to become a part of the prevailing opinion if they can.

Professor Berns, as a disciple of Strauss, holds that this democratic or liberal idea is essentially barbarous. His book on the Supreme Court is an indictment of its alleged service to liberal conceptions of society. The proper role of a judiciary, he maintains, is to dispense justice, and this the present Supreme Court, with its concern for civil liberties, has not done.

Freedom, Berns argues, is not a right but a privilege. "No citizen," he asserts, "has a *right* to free speech, whatever the Court has said to the contrary in the past or will say in the future" (Berns's italics here and following). The citizen has only the obligation to do what is right, for "the purpose of law is and must be to promote virtue, not to guarantee rights of *any* description." Freedom should be extended only "to those we can trust not to misuse the privilege," to "citizens of *good character*." It is a mischievous liberal idea that freedom means the freedom to do as one may please; this permits evil men to do evil deeds. Freedom is, rather, what John Winthrop proclaimed it to be: "a liberty to that only which is good,

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just, and honest."* In Berns's terms, it is the "freedom to do good and speak the truth." Hence the First Amendment must be reinterpreted to read: "Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of *good* speech." Commitment to the democratic idea of civil liberty is not enough—indeed, "freedom is not enough"—for "civil liberties guarantee [only] peaceful change, not change for the better," and this is an ignoble ideal.

Berns argues that the judge deciding cases involving freedom of speech requires, at the outset, a moral principle by which he can distinguish "good" speech from "bad." This moral principle cannot be freedom, for "freedom in itself has no intrinsic merit." It cannot be the liberal faith in full and free discussion, which is a "formalistic" and "empty process"; the liberal who exalts discussion is indifferent to the merits or truth of competing claims, and his faith in discussion is "unsupported by reason." Nor, finally, can the judge's moral standard be the principle of democracy, which in Berns's view rests on the passing whims of public opinion; "that the noxious doctrine might win over the democratic doctrine is a possibility . . . liberals do not entertain."

The only legitimate moral principle, according to Berns, is virtue or justice; and justice, Socrates taught, consists in giving each man his due. The judge, therefore, "must not only know the right, he must also possess the rhetorical skill to explain, teach, and convince in order to do the right." He must be a teacher and legislator, not an arbitrator or referee. To achieve justice, the judge must recognize that "the formation of character is the principal duty of government." Law must concern itself with "the inner life of man"—not, as liberals would have it, with external behavior. This, of course, implies censorship, and Berns, though he admits that it is dangerous, insists that censorship is necessary. For, just as "civil society is impossible if every man retains an absolute freedom of opinion," so moral education is impossible without some censorship. "Only if the community is made up predominantly of citizens of *good character,* who trust one another, is freedom not only possible but desirable."

In this manner, then, we come down from the new scholasticism to such mundane matters as the Communist party and allegedly obscene novels and motion pictures. Berns's position on these matters is the predictably conservative one, however much it may differ from that of other conservatives in other respects. It is useful, therefore, in the light of rather widespread support for this position, to examine its theoretical underpinnings.

Let us consider, first, Berns's notion that justice—giving each man his due—is the proper end of government. Although this teaching has persisted for some two thousand four hundred years of human history, it is deceptive political doctrine.

To begin with, to conceive of justice primarily in terms of specific right acts—rather than as a political arrangement or regime—is to focus one's quest for justice not on institutions or processes but on the rule of allegedly wise men; when morally right acts are the chief concern, only those who know what is right, and what should be done to achieve it, ought to rule. However, the quest for philosopher-kings, as Socrates well knew, is a utopian one. No actual "aristocracy" has in fact been based on the principle of merit. The real choice, instead, has always been between systems that tend to oligarchy and those that approximate some degree of democracy.

To secure justice, then, what matters most is a political regime that curbs, so far

*Some additional sentences from Winthrop's argument, not given by Berns, are revealing. Winthrop says: "This liberty is maintained and exercised in a way of subjection to authority; it is of the same kind of liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. The woman's own choice makes such a man her husband; yet being so chosen, he is her lord, and she is to be subject to him, yet in a way of liberty, not of bondage; and a true wife accounts her subjection her honor and freedom, and would not think her condition safe and free, but in her subjection to her husband's authority" (from *A Speech to the General Court,* July 3, 1645).

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as humanly possible, the mistaken or oppressive acts of temporary rulers. In this sense, justice is inherent in the political arrangement of a people, rather than in the specific acts of officials. It is no sufficient indictment of a democratic or judicial system to point to "bad" policies or decisions; for no government or court is infallible, and the most democratic system may enact some unjust laws. What is necessary is that the system contain the machinery to correct these injustices.

By making justice the supreme, even the sole, end of government, Berns attempts to identify ethics and politics. Yet Socratic justice can be at best only one of the many virtues of social institutions; the law must look to order and system as well. Socratic justice apportions and divides; it seeks not to reconcile opposing claims but to give each its due. Yet a state must do more than this: it must establish rules of conduct which relate to the general convenience (and which may not themselves be based on ethical distinctions at all—e.g., traffic regulations) and the common good. It must create a political order that balances or harmonizes competing claims, lest some portion of the community be alienated and estranged. And because a democratic state in particular seeks always to strengthen the bonds of social cohesion, it must distinguish, rather than identify, ethical ideals and political rules. The state need not, and should not, be the arbiter of all moral issues.

As for giving each man his due, what is one's due? How is that due to be determined? One looks in vain in Berns's book, and in other works by neo-conservatives, for a meaningful definition. Like Lippmann and Strauss, Berns appeals to the knowledge of decent and reasonable men. They "know" what is one's due because they are decent and reasonable men, and they are decent and reasonable because they know it, etc., etc.

The liberal view of freedom, which Berns rejects, is that of an ordered system of liberties and restraints—not some absolute freedom or non-freedom, but rather a choice among particular liberties. We value the liberty of a pedestrian to cross the street in safety more than we do the liberty of an automobile driver to drive his vehicle without any limitations; hence, traffic lights and speed limits restrain the latter's freedom. In the liberal view, the problem of freedom in the real world is to decide which from among the many diverse liberties we most prize, and to impose appropriate restraints in order to secure those liberties.

Berns argues that the liberal conception of freedom exalts the individual man at the expense of the community. Yet even a 19th-century liberal like Mill contended that the problem of freedom was twofold; freedom from the arbitrary controls of government, and also freedom from the arbitrary restraints of private powers. Liberals can, and do, support governmental restraints which curb the potential oppressive acts of private powers, for a governmental restraint on X, who would otherwise restrain Y, often conduces to the greater liberty of Y. The real question is to decide which restraints are to be imposed, by whom, and for what purposes —and that question is the very substance of politics in a democracy.

BERNS terms it "positively un-American to speak of the American democracy as a mere process of reaching political decisions, or more specifically, as a regime based not on a moral principle but on full and free discussion." Yet the essence of the American democracy is precisely this commitment to a process. Authoritarian states can have stated ends to which all are required to submit. Democratic states, because they recognize that men seek to pursue different ends, build instead on a method through which conflicts can be negotiated. The alternative to such a process, to the idea of peaceful change which Berns rightly ascribes to our conception of civil liberties, is the authoritarian suppression of change, or the acceptance of mutual slaughter as a technique of violent change. Thus, in a democratic state free speech must be regarded not as a privilege but as a right—not

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a "natural right" in Berns's sense, to be sure, but a right essential to the very nature of democracy. Only if men are free to speak, to persuade others to join with them in pursuit of other freedoms, can we hope to achieve a just resolution of conflicts as to which freedoms are to be secured. Freedom of speech, that is to say, is the necessary means of determining our other freedoms, if we are not to surrender this determination to a group of allegedly superior men.

It is preposterous to insist, as Berns does, that liberalism must argue for the unfortunate statement of Justice Holmes that the test of truth is its ability to win acceptance in the competition of the market place. Popularity is not a guarantee of truth; all that liberalism stands for is the principle that in the absence of final truth, freedom of expression is essential—lest our opinions harden into that rigidity which authoritarians mistake for truth. Freedom of speech is necessary not because it assures truth but because it makes possible the correction of error.

Similarly, it is preposterous to hold, with Berns, that liberals close their eyes to the possibility that the "noxious doctrine" may win out in the free competition of ideas. The more important liberal thinkers—men like Morris Cohen, John Dewey, R. M. MacIver, and Bertrand Russell—live with a sense of tragedy, a realistic perception of the risks attendant upon a free society. They see, as the neo-conservatives do not, that growth and, let it be added, virtue, come only from free choice. And if men are to be free to choose, they must be free to examine alternative possibilities, and to act on the basis of their own best judgment.

GIVEN Berns's views on the nature of freedom, justice, and government, how does he conceive the role of the Supreme Court in the American democracy? He wants the judge (1) to assume the role of legislator, and subordinate even the Constitution to "justice"; and (2) to control, through appropriate censorship, the inner life of the citizens so as to develop "good character." If the Supreme Court were to attempt these things, it would cease to be a court and would become a body of philosopher-kings. Such an attempt is hardly feasible politically, but it would also be highly undesirable—even if those philosopher-judges held more advanced social views than those of Professor Berns.

If an elected assembly is deprived by a censorial interventionist judiciary of its power to make the major policy decisions of government, it becomes a subordinate rather than a primary power in the process of legislation. It also, at the same time, loses its creativity and sense of responsibility. Why, in those circumstances, should the legislature reflect seriously on the pressing issues of the day? Why, indeed, should it think at all? Surely the Court will do all that needs to be done.

Berns nowhere considers the consequences to the American system of government of his argument for judicial, rather than legislative, philosopher-kings. He assumes a judiciary with a will of its own and the power to implement that will. Yet in all the cases that Berns cites, the Court acts only when the issues are brought to it; the Court does not *initiate* actions. To be sure, when the Court acts on cases brought before it, it in some sense establishes policy—either negatively, by telling the Congress and the Executive what they may not do, or positively, by interpreting statutes so as to spell out the nature and limits of legitimately exercised power. But such power, great as it is, constitutes no more than the controls of a nocturnal council; it does not convert the Court into a daytime government. For the Court to become such a government, to become a true body of philosopher-kings, the American system of government would have to be transformed. It seems curious that Berns never recommends, or confronts the consequences of, such a transformation.

In general, Berns tends to obliterate the necessary distinction between the role of a legislator and that of a judge. No one would seriously deny that a judge, in interpreting law, makes law; but there is a difference

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between law-making within the contours of policy set by high constitutional compromises, and law-making without regard to the legislative will. As the English system exemplifies even more than does the American, the legislator and judge are different persons holding different offices with different duties. Legislators must, in principle, look forward and promulgate rules designed to govern the conduct of men in future relationships. Judges, on the other hand, must look backward, to see whether men have broken rules already established; they can punish men only in terms of penalties assigned by the law for violations of those rules. American judges occasionally—and, because of judicial review, to some extent necessarily—confuse the two functions of judge and legislator, but to have them assume a completely legislative role, as Berns proposes, is to remove all certainty from the law. It is to convert the law into a series of *ex post facto* edicts that reflect no more than the changing whims of irresponsible judges.

It seems odd that a neo-conservative like Berns, who might be expected to approach traditional institutions with piety, if not reverence, should be so cavalier when it comes to the Constitution. Yet he writes: "The purpose of the Supreme Court cannot be described as making justice conform to the Constitution. It is rather to make the Constitution conform to justice." Now judges in the American system take an oath to support the Constitution, not Berns's conception of justice; and it would be not only presumptuous, but unlawful, for those judges to do as Berns demands. In this sense, his proposals are not at all conservative, but quite reactionary.

Reactionary, too, are Berns's views on the necessity of censorship to bring about right thinking. To control inner belief through law, as Berns proposes, is not only to confound the realms of ethics and politics; it is effectively to prevent changes in the law through criticism from below. For if men are so educated, to use Berns's terms, "that suppression and persecution become unnecessary," it can only be because their minds have been denuded of all creative and dissident ideas. This demands both positive instruction in the right, as Berns conceives it, and the exclusion of ideas that might lead people to entertain and act on notions that are deemed wrong.

Berns is so concerned to censor "evil" publications that he slights, even as he grants, the dangers inherent in censorship—in particular, that the censors may be bigoted and incompetent men. This becomes ironic when he condemns the judges whom he would make philosopher-kings for approving the sale of certain "obscene" publications like *Headquarters Detective* and disapproving Edmund Wilson's novel, *Memoirs of Hecate County*. And what shall we say of those censors who would prohibit from the mails D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, the latter (if we are to believe our Postmaster) because certain passages are "well calculated to deprave the morals of persons . . . and almost equally certain to arouse libidinous thoughts in the minds of the average normal reader"?

For the Court—or government generally—to assume the obligation of forming "good character" is to move far beyond its proper province. For this is to invade the sphere of social prerogatives—of the family and religious congregation and voluntary associations of every sort—and to transform a democratic into a totalitarian state.

I HAVE not dwelt here on the more technical aspects of Berns's argument, in particular his use of case materials; for these have received their appropriate corrections in the legal journals.* Nor have I considered the important application of Berns's argument on freedom for "good speech" only, in which he calls for the outright suppression of the Communist party. To point out his misunderstanding of Marxist teaching, and his failure to draw the necessary dis-

*See, for example, the reviews by Carl A. Auerbach in the *Northwestern University Law Review* (March-April 1958) and Kenneth L. Karst in the *Harvard Law Review* (May 1958).

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tinction between the lawful activities and beliefs of that party, on the one hand, and its unlawful practices, on the other, would require more space than is warranted here. But these and other deficiencies* testify to the fact that Berns's moral earnestness is no substitute for empirical knowledge and logical reasoning.

This is not, however, to say that Berns's book lacks merit. Its value is not as a work of constitutional law, but as a statement of a significant—though relatively small—school of political philosophy that is currently challenging the liberal conception of society. Berns's book also reminds us that some of our Justices have not been wise men, and that some of the Court's decisions have actually been foolish. Finally, it emphasizes once again that judicial review is an undemocratic institution; but here Berns draws not the inference that judicial review should therefore be abandoned, but rather the contention that it should therefore be retained: "for judicial review provides virtue with, as it were, a final chance."

What Berns and other neo-conservatives value above all is a regime that would reduce the bulk of humanity to the status of children, if not of subjects or slaves. Under the pretense that they are being ruled by a body of wise men, of philosopher-kings, he would have citizens who lack "good character" and the "right morality" restrained from exercising the democratic rights of citizenship. He would manipulate and coerce them so as to make them "truly free." And his conception of "true freedom" is essentially that of submission to the true religion, a civil or secular morality in which Nature is substituted for God.

We are fortunate that no Justice has yet succumbed to the appeals of this "new" scholasticism. If one should do so, the winds of doctrine that now beset the Supreme Court would be so agitated as to threaten the very foundations of our democratic system; for it is one of the striking paradoxes of neo-conservative thought that its utopian view of "justice" always seems to lead to a narrow view of civil liberties.

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*A few observations on Berns's methods would seem in order, in view of the pride which neo-conservatives take in their scholarship and rigorous logic:

1. Berns, a True Believer, sees complex questions primarily in simple and extreme terms. No sophisticated student of American constitutional law, for example, would pretend that a case is susceptible of only one interpretation; yet time and again Berns cites a judicial ruling, e.g. the Murray Winters obscenity case, as if the judge were there concerned with but a single issue—bad books—to the exclusion of other issues, such as requiring the New York legislature to draft careful, non-blunderbuss legislation.

2. He is frequently guilty of distortion. One of his key propositions, for example, is that jurisprudence is concerned with knowledge of what is right and how that right is to be done. He seeks to establish this by quoting the definition given in the Oxford Dictionary: that "jurisprudence is 'knowledge of and skill in the law or the right.'" But then, though he warns us of the need to emphasize each element of this definition, he promptly omits the terms "law" and "or" so as to make the definition refer only to "the right." Later, he renders the quotation from the Oxford Dictionary differently, as "knowledge of and skill in law," but *jus*, he tells us, means law or right, and since *lex* means law, *jus* should be rendered as right, or the right. Thus Berns achieves a linguistic leap that enables him to condemn jurists for being what they are—practitioners in or students of law—instead of the philosophers that he wants them to be. (My own copy of the Oxford Universal Dictionary—3rd ed. revised, 1955—defines jurisprudence as "knowledge of *or* skill in law." The word "right" nowhere appears in the definition.)

3. Berns plays fast and loose with the rules of argument. To support his contention that judges must concern themselves with moral considerations, for example, he asserts that "judges cannot be amoral because law is not amoral." But he immediately adds, "Amoral law is bad law." Now clearly, if law is not amoral, there cannot be, in this sense, bad law; while if there is amoral law that is therefore, bad, it is false to say that law is not amoral. What is involved here and elsewhere, of course, is Berns's confusion of the actual and the ideal; when he writes "is," he means "ought."

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A GROUP OF POEMS

LEONARD WOLF

MY MOTHER

MY MOTHER used to say:
Laughter and light—
That's all it takes to deal with life.

And, with that,
She became urgently busy,
Worked like a horse,
Cooking, washing,
Bedroom to cellar,
Cupboard to attic,
Windows and walls,

Until her hands were like the hands
Of a day laborer:

Out of the water
Into the dough,
Out of the dough,
Into the water.

And running, running
Running like a heavy bird
Newly created and already sick
That hardly knows what food
It ought to eat.

Well . . .

When she came to die
It's true that she had, indeed,
A golden candelabrum for
Her Chanukahs,
But, as for laughter . . .

Hush—

An ugly story.

IN THOSE DAYS

IN THOSE days
I dreamed a lot
As children dream.
Everything at once
And nothing worth remembering.

But one dream I remember:

How the Sunday bells rang
And all the lovely children
With whom I had never exchanged a word,
Dressed in all their wealth,
Washed, scrubbed and combed,
Boys and girls,
Stood and waited for something
Happy and fine.

And suddenly I knew
(And they, never)
That in a little while there would come
(in a very little while)
The gypsies and their horses
And their whips

And there would be tumult,
The weeping of children,
The whipping of boys and girls,
The neighing of horses,
The muddying of Sunday shoes,
Children, dragged by the hair.

And afterward
A long, wet summer.

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O! IT USED TO BE SUCH A PLEASURE

O IT used to be such a pleasure
To sing the old pious songs,

The delicious young women
Used to watch us
And we were able to pray,

We prayed lustily,
With a rich and happy laughter.

The pretty, pretty women
With their eyes alight
Peeped at us, around our fire,
Our holy fire,

And with their fine, tiny laughter
They disturbed our prayers
A little

And we were able to know
That in the farthest distance,
In the most distant stars
There dwelt a delighted God
With a delicate mouth
And satisfied eyes.

And we were able,
Devoutly, so devoutly,
To pray.

CONGRATULATIONS

FOR this, you really deserve congratulations,
Not everyone would have known
How to deal with such a woman.

Such women love to cry—
They complain of their lot.
They talk of love
They wash the dishes.
They cook little delicacies.
(And one can see how they lick
Their fingers.)

And you!
How cleverly you handled yourself.

Such a scholar.
What remarkable wisdom:

You spoke of love
(Hot as in a sweating dream)
You complained of your lot
(How heavily the whole world
Lies on your shoulders)
And you struggled, yourself,
With the dishes
(Somewhat cracked)
And, as for the delicacies—
With greasy fingers
You ate them all.

Congratulations.

LEONARD WOLF'S verse has appeared before in COMMENTARY. The group we print in this number is unique in one special respect, having been, according to Mr. Wolf, "composed in Yiddish and translated, almost at once, into English." Mr. Wolf was born in Vulcan, Rumania, in 1923 and came to the United States in 1930. After having earned his bachelor's and master's degrees at the University of California, he went to the University of Iowa for his doctor's degree. He has been for the past several years an assistant professor of English and creative writing at San Francisco State College. His verse has appeared in a great number of periodicals including *Poetry, Hudson Review, Yale Review, Atlantic Monthly,* the *New Yorker,* and *Commonweal.*

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SOCIAL REVOLUTION IN CUBA

The Future of the New Regime

HAROLD LAVINE

WHEN Fidel Castro was in the Sierra Maestra, he spent most of his time talking. What little fighting there was, was done by his firebrand younger brother Raul, and by Major Ernesto Guevara, his pro-Communist aide. Castro himself simply harangued the men about him—his officers, his *barbudos,* and the U. S. correspondents who came calling on him once Herbert L. Matthews of the New York *Times* had shown the way. It would, of course, be too much to say that Fidel Castro talked the Batista dictatorship to death; it was already so rotten that it was doomed to fall apart. Still, there can be little doubt but that the revolutionary leader's constant attacks on the dictatorship greatly hastened its collapse: what he kept saying about Fulgencio Batista was so obviously true that the latter's own troops came eventually to believe it.

Ten months after having taken power in Cuba, Fidel Castro is still talking, as he moves about the country from Havana to Pinar del Rio and back to Havana again, stopping off always in the Sierra Maestra. He harangues the workers and the *campesinos,* holds innumerable press conferences, delivers long, rambling discourses over the government radio and television—he needs no special occasion to stand before the TV cameras and talk for three, or four, or even five hours. It would be a mistake, however, to deduce that Castro is merely a compulsive talker: if he says anything that comes into his mind, he also believes everything that he says.

HAROLD LAVINE, an associate editor of *Newsweek,* has visited Fidel Castro's Cuba twice this year. Mr. Lavine's last previous article in this magazine was "The Decline of the Republican Party," in our August 1958 issue.

The result is government by television—a phenomenon certainly unique in history. The Cubans, watching and listening in front of their TV sets, have come to accept whatever words drop from their leader's lips as the law of the land—sometimes with preposterous consequences. Discussing on television the curbs he had put on gambling, Castro one night declared that Cuba had an abundance of other tourist attractions and could have still more—bullfighting, for instance, he suggested. At once, architects started drawing up blueprints for bull rings, and companies were organized to build them; newspapers hired experts from Madrid and Mexico City to write articles for the Cubans explaining the spectacle, and the air crackled with resolutions in favor of bullfighting—and against it. But sometimes the results can be tragic. Before Castro came to power, Cuba's Negroes were as much discriminated against economically, socially, and politically as Negroes anywhere in our own South, despite the fact that Jim Crow laws do not exist there. Suddenly Castro announced one night that he was going to end this discrimination. Almost instantly, without plan or preparation, crowds of Negroes started to invade restricted suburban developments and beach clubs. Trouble developed and it became necessary to call out the police.

Fidel Castro is a romantic, bubbling over with fine ideas about economic, social, and political justice; it must also be added that the level of his ideas are those of a "campus radical"—and that, of course, is what he once was. He is incredibly disorganized: the complexities of government are not only beyond him, they bore him to distraction. He would rather talk grandiloquently about eliminating poverty, and issue pronuncia-

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mentos about land or rent reform, than grapple with the concrete problems involved in such reforms—he lets his ministers worry about all that. Many of these ministers are extremely competent, responsible men who are doing their best; but it goes without saying that no government official can really operate when his plans may be disrupted in a twinkling by some vagrant idea that wanders into the Prime Minister's head at one thirty in the morning while he is talking on TV.

There are those who, looking hard at Cuba, insist that Castro's government by TV will lead, inevitably, to chaos. And there are others who think it will end in Communism. The signs of approaching chaos are not hard to find: the construction industry, once the second biggest employer in Cuba, has ground almost to a halt; unemployment has risen alarmingly; the price of sugar, a product on which Cuba depends for most of its national income, is the lowest in nineteen years; the peso, though still worth a dollar in Cuba itself, has fallen to between sixty and seventy cents in the rest of the world. As for the Communists, they now seem to be everywhere—in the government, the army, the labor movement; in the schools, in radio and TV, and in the newspaper business.

Yet the alternative that faces Cuba is not, necessarily, chaos or Communism. There is a third possibility: Cuba could simply develop into a highly regimented leftist state, with dictatorial aspects, to be sure, but nevertheless not an absolute dictatorship. What makes this possible is, paradoxically, the very fact that the revolutionary leader appears incapable of ever sitting down to work and getting his government organized.

REVOLUTIONS have a logic of their own, and what happened in Cuba when Fulgencio Batista fled and Fidel Castro came down from the Sierra Maestra was not merely a change in government, but a revolution, which is well on its way now to tearing apart the whole social, economic, and political fabric of the country. If Castro were a man with a coherent body of ideas and the discipline to put them into practice, he might have guided the revolution in any direction he chose. Since he is not, the law of cause and effect has taken over, and the revolution has created forces which may soon become inexorable. Already, it is a revolution in the classic pattern. Already, it has begun to devour the very people who created it.

The Cuban revolution started as a revolt of the upper middle class and the professional class. Fidel Castro is himself the son of a well-to-do sugar planter in Mayari, near Santiago. He was educated at a Roman Catholic boarding school in Santiago, where most of his classmates also were the sons of well-to-do sugar planters. From there he went to Belén, a Jesuit college in Havana, and from Belén to Havana University.

When he launched the revolution on July 26, 1953, by attacking Moncada barracks in Santiago, nearly all his one hundred and fifty-odd followers were classmates and friends, boys from families very much like his own. It was this, in fact, that saved Castro after the Moncada garrison smashed the attack and captured the survivors. The families had enough influence to persuade the Batista government to imprison, rather than shoot, their captives. Castro and his followers served only seven months in prison before Batista amnestied them.

When Castro went into the Sierra Maestra, it was again with boys from well-to-do families like his own. And, for a long time, almost the only support they had came from the upper middle class and the professional class. The *campesinos* were suspicious of Castro and his followers: after all, they were from another world, almost from another race. Nor did the *Fidelistas* have any support among the workers: the labor unions were, at that time, part and parcel of the Batista regime. Finally, Communists simply derided Castro as a bourgeois romantic—which he was.

The doctors, the lawyers, the businessmen with connections in the United States, the Bacardi family—these were the people who supported Castro. They bought arms for him

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in Miami and smuggled them into the Sierra Maestra; they raised money for him; they arranged for U. S. correspondents to visit him and write his story. Appalled by the corruption of the Batista government, its brutality and lawlessness, these same people wanted, basically, a liberal, democratic government, like that of the United States. Many of them had themselves been educated in the States, and now had their children in school there; many had spent years in exile in the U. S. during the Machado dictatorship in Cuba. These people spoke English and read English; they vacationed regularly in Miami and New York.

It was only after Batista's troops started torturing *campesinos* to find out where Castro and his *barbudos* were hiding that Castro began to draw support from the countryside. And it was only after the Batista government began, visibly, to disintegrate that Castro won the support of the Communists. The labor unions rallied to him last of all—when their leaders fled Cuba, along with Batista.

THERE are those who argue that Batista had made a liberal, democratic government impossible. He had robbed, tortured, and killed too many people, they say; when he fled, there were too many Cubans crying for revenge against his gunmen, Cubans who had suffered much too long to wait for a liberal, democratic government to work its reforms. The point is arguable, but the fact is that Castro never had any intention of establishing a liberal, democratic government. A campus radical at Belén and a campus radical at Havana University, Fidel Castro had remained a campus radical in the Sierra Maestra.

It will be recalled that one of his first acts was to suspend *habeas corpus*, round up those suspected of having served as gunmen for Batista, and put them on public trial. These trials turned out to be not much more than government-sponsored lynching bees: the audiences consisted of howling, weeping mobs; there were no rules of evidence. Although the Cuban constitution forbids capital punishment, everyone convicted was executed—and everyone accused was convicted.

Fidelistas now maintain that Castro prevented a blood-bath when he staged the public trials: if he had not done so, they say, the people would simply have run wild, killing every suspected Batista gunman in sight. Again, this is arguable—but to many of those who supported Castro because they believed in a liberal, democratic government, the sight of men being tried while mobs screamed, "Kill them, Kill them," was a shattering experience.

There was an outcry against Castro's drumhead courts throughout Latin America, even in countries like Costa Rica which had backed his revolution, and, as will be remembered, in the United States, as well. The leader's reaction was to set a pattern: "We have given orders to shoot every last one of these murderers, and if we have to oppose world opinion to carry out justice, we will do it. . . . If the Americans do not like what is happening, they can send in the Marines. Then there will be 200,000 *gringos* dead. We will make trenches in the streets."

It was Batista's cancellation of the Cuban elections of 1952 that had turned Castro to revolution, and Castro had repeatedly promised to hold elections when he came to power. Now, he abruptly changed his mind. Elections would be a travesty, he argued, until the followers of Batista were purged. The argument seemed weak: when Batista fled, it was because almost everyone in Cuba had turned against him; his few remaining followers were in hiding. What Castro really feared, evidently, was that an election would bring into power a liberal, democratic government. He preferred his revolutionary government—by TV.

Meanwhile, Castro began purging the armed forces and the civil service. Out went almost every professional soldier; out went every civil service worker who owed his job to a Batista henchman. And since it had been all but impossible to get a job in the Batista government, even as a clerk or typist, without a letter from such a hench-

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man, in the end, about 40,000 of the 60,000 civil service workers were fired. But while the professional soldiers were easily replaced —by *barbudos*—the purge of the civil service created turmoil. Moreover, it opened the way for Communist infiltration of the government bureaucracy; every ministry was desperate for manpower, and the Communists came flocking.

The great majority of Castro's supporters among the upper middle class and the professional class accepted (at least, they excused) his failure to establish a government of law. And most of them defended vehemently his refusal to prevent the Communists from infiltrating the government—at first, anyway. In part, the attitude they adopted was that of American New Dealers in the 1930's: the Communists, they said, were a political party; to discriminate against them was undemocratic. They also reacted in the same way some New Dealers did during the Alger Hiss case: just as these New Dealers viewed any suggestion that Hiss might have been a Communist as an underhand attack on the New Deal itself, so did they view any discussion of the Communist problem in Cuba as an underhand attack on the Castro government.

CASTRO'S economic program was another question entirely. This hit many of his original supporters where it really hurt: right in the pocketbook. One of his first actions was arbitrarily to cut rents; all rents under $100 a month were cut by 50 per cent; between $100 and $200 a month, by 40 per cent; over $200 a month, by 30 per cent. Castro thought, with justice, that rents were much too high. But there was a reason for high rents. Under Batista, seeing it as the only comparatively safe investment, Cubans all put their savings into real estate, with the result that property values went sky high. Cutting rents, Castro cut the value of the property, and killed the real estate market. Construction halted, tens of thousands of workers became unemployed, the sale of such products as steel and cement fell by more than 50 per cent.

Whether Castro anticipated these grave consequences is a question. The *Fidelistas* say he did: that, in fact, he wanted to force the upper middle class to put its savings into light industry, which Cuba sorely needs. Maybe so—but the fact is that few people have been putting their savings into light industry. Most people are fearful of investing their savings in anything, since they know that a word from *El Maximo Lidar de la Revolucion,* as Castro calls himself, could very well cut the investment in half. All Castro has succeeded in doing is rip to shreds the pocketbooks of those who financed him—and worsen Cuba's unemployment problem.

The land reform program has also been a cause of consternation. Even the most violent critics of Castro will admit that Cuba has long needed land reform. The trouble is that Castro's land reform program amounts to confiscation. The government plans to buy the big estates at their assessed valuation, which in Cuba (as almost everywhere else, including the U. S.) is far below the market price. And the government plans to pay for the estates with twenty-year, 4½ per cent bonds, of which the interest and proceeds must be reinvested in Cuba. Americans own about $300 million worth of land in Cuba, and the U. S. government has officially protested against the Castro land reform program. This has incensed the *Fidelistas,* but, argue as they will, the landowners still consider the program confiscation. The result has been the inevitable one: foreign capital investment has almost disappeared.

Quite aside from this, another criticism may be made of the land reform program: it limits individual landholdings to 995 acres and promises every *guajiro* at least 66 acres. One of Cuba's problems is that it cannot today grow sugar as efficiently as many other countries, including Cuba's hated neighbor, the Dominican Republic. Chopping up the big estates into 66-acre landholdings will hardly make Cuba's sugar production more efficient. The *Fidelistas* admit this, but they argue that Cuba has

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long been too dependent on sugar, and should have a more diversified agriculture. True, but the simple fact remains that Cuba right now is dependent on sugar for its foreign exchange. Under Castro's land reform program, Cuba will either continue to grow sugar, less efficiently, or else become a nation of subsistence farmers. In the latter case, where will Cuba's foreign exchange come from?

In simple fact, the land reform program has caused even the *Fidelistas* to boggle a bit, and it created the first major split in their movement. When it was first promulgated, several members of Castro's own Cabinet denounced it; Castro retaliated by firing five of his twenty ministers, including the Minister of Agriculture, Humberto Sori Marin.

WHETHER or not Castro anticipated the problems his program would create, he can now hardly fail to realize that he does have problems—he sees that at least a third of the Cuban labor force of 2.3 million are unemployed. He is now planning to pick up part of the slack in employment with a public works program, which, inevitably, must create new problems, for where can the government find the money for such a program except through inflation? The whole trend in Cuba today is toward inflation. When the land reform program gets fully under way, it will cost tens of millions of pesos more—the government will have to supply the *guajiros* with tools, with machinery, with seed, even with food; but Castro doesn't have the money.

When all this is said, it must be added that the situation is not entirely dark. Castro has done a remarkable job of collecting taxes. By converting the lottery into a bond program, Castro has not only eliminated a major source of corruption in Cuba, he also has raised millions for housing. At the same time imports have dropped, which, fortunately, has kept the foreign exchange problem from becoming completely hopeless.

Thus, in spite of the scare stories, Cuba does not yet face a financial crisis—but eventually Cuba must. Castro must give his people work, and he must also go through with his land reform program, whether it makes sense or not, for the *guajiros*, who have been promised land, cannot be denied land for long.

When the financial crisis does come, it may lead to chaos—and the Communists may then attempt to seize power. What is equally likely, however, is that Castro will impose stringent controls on the economy. Disillusionment with the revolution will grow; the opposition will become more active; and, in a country where there are no democratic channels through which to express opposition, it may take violent forms.

In that event, Castro may be tempted to adopt repressive measures. He will have the police behind him, and the army, and the *guajiros*. Given his temperament, there is little likelihood that he will hesitate to use them.

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MRS. BENSON

A Story

JAMES PURDY

"I DON'T know why Mrs. Carlin entertained," Mrs. Benson admitted. "She didn't like it, and she couldn't do it."

"I had to sit an entire hour under one of those potted palms she had in her house," Mrs. Benson's daughter, Wanda, recalled. "There was a certain *odor* about it—whether from the soil, or the plant, or the paper about the container. I felt terribly uncomfortable."

The two women, Wanda Walters, unmarried and thirty, from Philadelphia, and her mother, who lived in Europe, and had been married many times, and who was now Mrs. Benson, had nearly finished their tea, in an English tearoom within walking distance from the American Express, in Paris.

Mrs. Benson had known the English tearoom for many years, though she could never exactly remember its French name, and so could not ever recommend it to her friends, and she and her daughter, when they had their yearly reunions in Paris, always came to it. Their meeting in Paris this year had been rather a prolonged one, owing to Wanda's having failed to get a return passage to the States, and it had been a summer that was hot, humid, and gray—and not eventful for either of them.

This year, too, they found themselves going less and less anywhere at all, and they were somewhat embarrassed—at least, Mrs. Benson said *she* was—to find that they spent the better part of the day in the English tearoom, talking, for the most part, about people they had both known in Philadelphia twenty-odd years ago, when Wanda had been "little," and when Mrs. Benson—well, as she said, had at least had a different name!

It was the first time in many years, perhaps *the* first, that Mrs. Benson had really talked with her daughter at length about anything (they had always *traveled* before, as the older woman said), and certainly the first time in Wanda's memory that they had talked at all about "back home," as Mrs. Benson now called it with a chilly, condescending affection. And if their French or American friends happened by now, Mrs. Benson, if not Wanda, expressed by a glance or word a certain disappointment that their "talk" must be interrupted.

Mrs. Benson had made it a fixed practice not to confide in her daughter (she had once said to a close friend of hers: "I don't know my daughter, and it's a bit too late to begin!"), but the name *Mrs. Carlin,* which had come into their conversation so haphazardly, as if dropped from the awning of the café, together with the gloominess of their Paris, had set Mrs. Benson off. *Mrs. Carlin* came to open up a mine of confidences and single isolated incidents.

This was interesting to Wanda because Mrs. Benson had always been loath to "tell," to reminisce. Mrs. Benson hated anecdotes, regarding them as evidence of senility in the old, and cretinism in the young, and though there were other people "back home," of course, Mrs. Carlin could easily carry them through for the rest of Paris, and the potted palms, which had so dismayed Wanda, seemingly set Mrs. Benson "right" at last.

"I don't suppose you remember when they were popular," Mrs. Benson referred to the palms. "But they were once nearly everywhere. I've always disliked them, and, I

THIS is JAMES PURDY'S second story in COMMENTARY; the first, "Encore" (March), was chosen for the O'Henry *Prize Short Stories, 1960,* to be published by Doubleday. Mr. Purdy's first novel, *Malcolm,* has just appeared under the imprint of Farrar, Straus, and Cudahy.

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think, perhaps, I even vaguely *fear* them."

"I don't think Mrs. Carlin *liked* them," Wanda said abruptly, so abruptly that Mrs. Benson dropped a long ash from her cigarette into her tea, and then called the waiter.

"How on earth do you know Mrs. Carlin didn't like them?" Mrs. Benson flushed slightly and then paused while the waiter brought her a fresh cup.

Wanda paused also. She felt that her mother did not *want* to know that she knew anything about Mrs. Carlin, and Wanda, in any case, was not very much interested in explaining what she did mean.

"I simply meant this," Wanda felt she must explain, under the *look* her mother gave her. "The part of the house Mrs. Carlin used for *entertainment* could not have reflected *anybody's* taste."

Mrs. Benson opened her eyes wide, and brought her mouth into a kind of cupid's bow. Then, in a voice quieter than her expression, she said: "I'd have to say, Wanda, that you were right!"

"But how on earth did you *know?*" Mrs. Benson suddenly brought out, and she looked at her daughter as if a fresh light had been thrown on the latter's character also.

"What I think I meant," Wanda began again, tearing apart one of the tiny envelopes of sugar that lay beside her spoon, "Mrs. Carlin was, as we both know, more than a *little* wealthy . . ."

Mrs. Benson cleared her throat, but then decided, evidently, not to speak, and her silence was as emphatic as she could make it.

"That is," Wanda went on slowly, "she could *afford* to entertain rather shabbily."

"Rather *shabbily?*" Mrs. Benson considered this. "That is a terribly queer word for *her.*"

"But you yourself . . ."

"I don't like potted palms," Mrs. Benson pushed through to what was, as her face showed, the important matter here, "and I don't like all those original early 19th-century landscapes with cattle," she became now as firm as if in court, "but as to her house being *shabby*. . . ."

"*Depressing* then," Wanda said. "It was certainly depressing."

Mrs. Benson laughed, guardedly indulgent. "You're so hard on the poor dear," she said in a tone of voice unlike her own.

"But I thought you thought as I did," Wanda cried. "About *her,* at least!" Displeasure and boredom rang in her voice, but there was an even stronger expression there of confusion and doubt.

"I do, and I don't," Mrs. Benson put endearment and confidence now into her voice. Then, unaccountably, she looked at her rings. She had many. They were, without doubt, too genuine, if anything, and as they shone in the late afternoon light, they made her mother look, Wanda felt, both very rich and very old.

"I think you're right, though," Wanda heard Mrs. Benson's voice continuing, "right about Mrs. Carlin's not caring whether she impressed *people* or not."

"I don't know if I quite meant that," Wanda told her mother, but under her breath now. "I mean only she didn't care whether they *enjoyed* themselves or not at her house!"

THEY were both silent for a moment, as if surprised at the difficulties which had suddenly sprung up from nowhere, difficulties that were so obscure in themselves, and yet which offered some kind of threat of importance.

"The potted palms were a fright, of course," Mrs. Benson seemed either conciliatory or marking time. "And even for potted palms, they were dreadful." She touched her daughter's arm lightly. "They looked *dead.*"

Going on, Mrs. Benson added: "I always thought of old-fashioned small-town Greek candy-kitchens when I saw those palm trees at Mrs. Carlin's. And her strange little painted-glass player piano, too!"

"I never saw *that,*" Wanda admitted. She looked away from her mother's expression.

"Oh, you've forgotten it, is all," Mrs. Benson said. "It played for *all* the guests, that player piano . . . at least once." She laughed. "Mrs. Carlin seldom invited anybody twice."

Mrs. Benson had a peculiar, oblique, faraway look in her eyes, a look Wanda did not

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remember quite ever having seen on her mother's face before—indeed, on anybody's face.

Then, suddenly clearing her throat, Mrs. Benson coughed ceremoniously, struggling perhaps with a decision.

The one thing, Wanda remembered again, the thing that her mother disliked so much in others, was stories, *anecdotes*—indeed any narration which was prolonged beyond the length of a paragraph. But usually when Mrs. Benson cleared her throat *and* coughed, she was going to tell something which was important and necessary, if not long, or anecdotal.

But then, quickly, as if she had been given a reprieve of some kind, Mrs. Benson cried: "Oh, it's all so *nothing!*" and poured herself some tea.

"But what else was there?" Wanda cried, annoyance and curiosity both in her voice. Mrs. Benson shook her head.

"You did have something special, I believe," Wanda was positive.

"Oh, not actually," Mrs. Benson said. Then, with her faraway look again, she managed to say, "I *was* remembering an afternoon—oh, a long, long time ago at Mrs. Carlin's. . . . But in a *different* part of the house, you see."

Wanda waited, suddenly touched with something stronger than curiosity. But she knew that if she so much as moved now, Mrs. Benson might remember her own horror of anecdotes, and would close up tight.

"I dread to think how long ago that actually was," Mrs. Benson continued carefully, and her eyes then strayed out to the street, where a bus was slowing down to stop for a woman and a small child.

Mrs. Benson waited for the woman and child to board the bus, then commencing again: "I can't believe that it was so long ago as 1935, I mean, or along in there. . . . But, Mrs. Carlin had already begun to entertain her guests in one part of the house . . . and to *live* herself in another! She had begun dividing up her life in that way!"

She smiled at Wanda, almost in the manner of one who had finished her story there.

Wanda nodded only enough to let her mother know she was listening.

"I don't care much for this *tea,* today," Mrs. Benson said suddenly in an unexpectedly loud voice, and she looked up and about the room.

WHEN Wanda said nothing, but showed that she was *waiting,* Mrs. Benson drank some more of the tea she did not like, and said: "Mrs. Carlin had never, I think, been particularly interested in *me,* as distinct from the others, until your father left me. . . . Evidently, *she* had never been too happy in her marriage, either . . . I gathered that from something she once let drop. . . ."

"However," Mrs. Benson said, raising the empty tea cup, and looking up under at the bottom of it hurriedly, "however, she wanted me to see things. I knew that. She wanted me to see the things—the part of the house, you understand, that the *others* never saw."

Wanda nodded, a kind of fleeting awareness in her face.

"That was when she called me, well *aside,* I suppose one would have to say, and said something to me like, *'I want to really have you in some time, Rose.'*"

It came as a sort of shock to Wanda to hear her mother's Christian name. She had not only not heard it for many years—she had actually forgotten it, so separate had their two lives, and their very names, become.

But Mrs. Benson had gone right on now through her daughter's surprise, or shock: "At first I hadn't quite understood what Mrs. Carlin meant, you see. . . . She had taken hold of my arm, gently, and let me out of the room where she had always entertained the *others.* We got into a small gold elevator, and were gone in a minute. . . . When we got out, well—let me assure you, there wasn't a potted palm in the place!

"It was another house, another atmosphere, another place and time!"

A look of something like pain crossed Wanda's face, but her mother missed this in her final decision to "tell."

"It was a bit incredible to me then, and it's more so now," Mrs. Benson anticipated her

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daughter's possible incredulity, or indifference.

Pausing briefly, it was Mrs. Benson's turn now to study her daughter's face critically, but evidently, at the last, she found nothing on the younger woman's face to stop her.

STILL, Mrs. Benson waited, looking at nothing in particular, while the waiter removed the empty cups, wiped the marble swiftly with a small cloth, bowed vaguely, and muttering part of a phrase, left.

Mrs. Benson commented perfunctorily on the indulgence of French waiters and French cafés, pointing out how wonderful it was to be able to stay *forever* when one wanted to.

Outside the light was beginning to fail, and a slight breeze came across to them from the darkening boulevard.

Wanda moved suddenly and unceremoniously in her chair, and Mrs. Benson fixed her with a new and indeterminate expression.

Raising her voice, almost as if to reach the street, Mrs. Benson said: "A week after Mrs. Carlin had showed me the 'real' part of the house, she invited me again, in an invitation she had written in her own hand, and which I must have somewhere, still.... I had never had a *written* invitation before from her, nobody had... always telephoned ones.... It was a dark January afternoon, I recall, and I was feeling, well, at that time, pretty low.... In the *new* part of the house—and I couldn't get over this time its *immensity*—tea was never mentioned, thank God, and we had some wonderful ancient Portuguese brandy. ... But as we sat there talking, I kept hearing something soft but arresting...."

Mrs. Benson stopped now in the guise of one who hears only what she is describing.

"Looking back away from Mrs. Carlin," Mrs. Benson said, "in the furthest part of the room, I was quite taken aback to see some actual *musicians*. Mrs. Carlin had an entire small string orchestra playing there for her. ... You know, I thought I was mistaken. I thought it was perhaps a large oil, a mural, or something.... But Mrs. Carlin touched my hand just then, and said, *'They're for you, Rose.'*"

Mrs. Benson pressed her daughter's hand lightly at that, as if to convey by some touch *part* of the reality of that afternoon.

"I think she wanted to *help* me," Mrs. Benson said in a flat plain voice now, and with a helpless admission of anticlimax. "Your father—as I said, had just *gone*, and I think she knew how everything stood."

Mrs. Benson avoided her daughter's glance by looking at her hands, which she held before her again now, so that there was the sudden quick scintillation again, and then went on: "When Mrs. Carlin took me to the door that day, I knew she wanted to say something else, something still more *helpful*, if you will, and I was afraid she was going to say what in fact she did."

Wanda's open-eyed expression made her mother suddenly smile.

"It was nothing sensational, my dear, or alarming! Mrs. Carlin was never *that!*"

"Well, for heaven's sake, then," Wanda cried.

"I said it was nothing sensational." In Mrs. Benson's dread of the *anecdote*—the inevitable concomitant of old age—she had so often told people nothing at all, and safety still, of course, lay in being silent. But as Wanda watched Mrs. Benson struggle there, postponing the telling of what she would have liked so much to tell, she realized in part what the struggle meant: Mrs. Benson had invariably all her life told her daughter *nothing*.

But Mrs. Benson had gone on again: "Mrs. Carlin was still beautiful then, and as I see now, *young*.... And I rather imagine that when she was very young, and when there had been, after all, a Mr. Carlin. . . ."

A look from Wanda sped Mrs. Benson on: "I don't know *why* I treasure what Mrs. Carlin said to me," she hurried faster now. "But it is one of the few things that any other human being ever said to me that I do hold on to."

Mrs. Benson looked at the *addition* which the waiter had left, and her lips moved slightly over what was written there.

"Mrs. Carlin said to me," she went on, still looking at the waiter's bill, although her eyes

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were closed, "'You're the only one who could *possibly* be asked in here with me, my dear. . . . I couldn't have the *others,* and I knew I couldn't have them. . . . They're not for *us* . . . And if you should ever feel you would like to *stay on,*' Mrs. Carlin said, '*why don't you, my dear?*'"

"She actually thought so well of you!" Wanda said, and then hearing the metallic hardness of her own voice, lowered her eyes in confusion.

"Of course, that was a long time ago," Mrs. Benson said vaguely, more of a cold edge now in her voice. "She wouldn't want *anyone* there now," she added.

"She is such a recluse then?" Wanda asked.

Mrs. Benson did not answer. She had taken some francs out of her purse and was staring at them.

"Some of this money," she pointed out, "have you noticed? It comes to pieces in one's hands. I hardly know what to do with some of the smaller notes."

"These little reunions in Paris are such a pleasure, Mother," Wanda said in a rather loud, bright voice.

"Are they, my dear?" Mrs. Benson answered in her old firm manner. Then, in a sudden hard voice: "I'm so glad if they are."

The two women rose from the table at the same time, Mrs. Benson having deposited some of the notes on the marble-topped table, and they moved toward the front of the café, and into the street.

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AN ENGLISH GIRL FINDS PALESTINE

A Personal Memoir

ANN ROELOFS

WHEN I was young my family lived in a suburb of London called Blackheath. This was rather a pleasant, old-fashioned part of London, not as sooty as it sounds. There was a broad heath where you could fly kites or run with the dog, and beyond the heath was Greenwich park, full of formal flower beds, grass, and chestnut trees, sloping down to the Thames. My grandmother and grandfather had lived there most of their lives in a tall elegant terrace house overlooking the heath. I had been born in what used to be my maternal grandparents' house in the same road a few yards away, and Blackheath was scattered with great uncles, aunts, and cousins from both sides of my family. In 1936 when I was thirteen we returned there to live, and my father bought an ugly red brick house in a side road off the heath to be near his parents.

My grandfather was a little man with a dry sense of humor. He lived to be ninety-eight and attributed his longevity to his daily ten-minute walk to Blackheath station where he caught an electric train to Charing Cross. From there he walked to the Marlborough Street court where he had been the magistrate for so many years he had become something of a character. There were frequently items in the newspapers about his remarkable age, and he always cut out and collected these brief notices, thoroughly enjoying his limited fame. His best known encounter was with D. H. Lawrence, who refers to him in two poems, "Thirteen Pictures" and "Auto-Da-Fé," as ". . . a magistrate whose stale sensibilities hate everything that's well," and ". . . the Grand Inquisitor . . . in Marlborough Road . . ."

Oh he has put his pince-nez on, and stoutly
has stepped down to the police-station cell
Where my darling pictures, prisoners, await
his deadly frown and his
grand-inquisitorial knell.

All my pretty pictures huddled in the dark awaiting their doom at the hands of Mr. Meade.

I loved my grandmother's house. Her drawing room was full of yellows and white, a yellow sofa with yellow silk cushions embroidered with black dragons on it, Chinese paintings, and a carved Buddha on the white mantelpiece. As I was the only girl in two generations my grandmother always noticed what I wore, would finger the material of my dresses, remarking as she did so on the weight and texture of the cloth. Yellow must have been her favorite color, because I went to see her in a yellow cotton frock one summer, and it pleased her very much. She was still autocratic and full of nervous energy at eighty, gardening, decorating the house, and embroidering more dragons.

I loved the spacious 19th-century calm of her house, the well-ordered Victorian serenity in which everyone knew his place, and no doubts appeared to exist. I was glad I was an English child and could feel safe from all the disasters, wars, and horrors that overtook people in other countries. The bombings of civilians in Abyssinia and Spain were in the news, but these were distant happenings in Europe and Africa. Nothing like that could happen to us, to me or my family. We had, I was sure, a certain God-given immunity from the dreadful things that happened to other people, and nowhere

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did I feel more secure or certain that things would continue as they always had done than in my grandmother's house.

She had two maids in frilly caps called Kate and Constance, who worked in the basement kitchens and pantries and slept at the top of the house on the fourth floor. Meals came up from the kitchens in an elevator in the hall, which fascinated my two brothers and me, and were then carried into the dining room. The dining room was darker than the drawing room and was hung with portraits of my grandmother's and grandfather's parents and grandparents. My grandmother's people, the Polands, were the interesting ones with big noses and clever faces. They had originally been Jewish fur merchants from Regensburg in Bavaria who had settled in the City of London in the 17th century and formed a guild that had grown into the Skinners Company. Once a year the company held a banquet in the City to which my father and all the numerous Poland relatives went, treating it as a vast family reunion.

But the biggest attraction of her house to us children were the trains at the bottom of the garden. It was a long, narrow, damp, walled garden with tall trees and mossy paths, and from the wall at the very bottom we could see, quite close, the railway lines and a procession of suburban trains entering and emerging from an underpass on their way to and from the London stations of Charing Cross and London Bridge.

MY FATHER was a barrister and had his chambers in the Inner Temple building overlooking the Victoria Embankment in the City. He never became even moderately successful, and what money he did make was eaten up by public school fees for the three of us and all the expensive extras that boarding schools required. So he was always trying to save money and cut down on our living expenses. My mother bore the brunt of this continual economizing and never had any fun, went out, or bought herself new clothes. Of course we could have been sent to any number of good day schools or grammar schools with low fees. But sending your children to public schools was such a criterion of class standing in England of the 30's, so essential to keeping up appearances and maintaining the correct accent, that it would have been a real admission of failure on my father's part to have sent us anywhere else. As long as we were at the right schools he had his self-respect, and felt he was doing his duty, no matter how strained and tense things were behind the scenes. The unreality of this situation bothered me. I felt acutely the difference between the way we lived and the conventional wealthy backgrounds of most of my school friends, and I wished so much that we were more like them.

My father was unsociable and lacked the warmth necessary to a wide circle of friends and acquaintances, without which success as a lawyer was more difficult for him to attain. As he saw his contemporaries at the Bar become well known through the years, he became increasingly bitter, frustrated, and anti-Semitic. I think that his particular brand of anti-Semitism arose from two sources, both connected with his work. On one hand were the successful Jewish barristers who had been knighted or made K.C.'s, such as Sir John Simon who had had rooms across the hall from my father and had shared a clerk with him at one time. At the other extreme were Jews in court for bankruptcy, Judgment Debtors, whom he had to cross-examine to find out exactly what their assets were, and whether or not they owned a house. One of my clearest memories of those days was my father's imitation of how these Judgment Debtors spoke, their broken English, sly evasiveness, and efforts to conceal ownership of property under his questioning. His impersonation was funny, and my brothers and I would laugh and ask for more, and he, delighted at our amusement, would continue with gesticulations: "No, ze house is not mine, it is my vife's"; "No, ze furniture is not mine either, it is my cousin's"; and so on.

My elder brother was four years older than I, and at this time was working in Lon-

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don as an articled clerk with a firm of solicitors, cousins of the family. My younger brother and I were still at boarding school, and it was the school holidays, which coincided with my father's legal vacations, that were so boring and dull. Although we had a cook she was more of a hindrance than a help to my mother. Her continual moods and tantrums needed constant mollification, and she complained alternately about my younger brother and me. One week it was "Lady, that great girl in and out of my kitchen all the time." Next week I would be in favor again and allowed to sit and talk at the kitchen table, while she went on about what a rude and lazy boy my brother was. My mother, harassed between our demands and my father's insistence on complete seclusion from neighbors' children or casual friends, engrossed herself in organizing an unending succession of very good meals on the small amount of housekeeping money allotted to her. Food was cheap in those pre-war days, margarine was something for the lower classes, and we ate large and delicious meals. My mother and I went shopping in Lewisham High Street, a crowded commercial and working-class district where there were wonderful street markets and food bargains. It was down the hill from our house, and I enjoyed the bustling pavements and outdoor stalls where fish, vegetables, hardware, and flowers could all be bought in the streets.

All through 1938 my father and elder brother would sit on at the table after meals, discussing at length the Conservative politicians, Dr. Dolfuss and the annexation of Austria, the Sudetenland and Chamberlain's vanity and stupidity at Munich. My brother felt particularly strongly about the Czechs, as on one of his vacations he had gone by Polish boat from London to Gdynia, port for Danzig, and thence to Prague. He sent me a picture postcard of some national monument or church from Prague, I remember. He knew what Masaryk had done for Czechoslovakia and could not believe that this tiny country where he had stayed so recently would be betrayed and invaded. He thought the British public stupidly complacent for being so pleased with Chamberlain after the Munich agreement, as he shouted from the windows of Downing Street the fatuous remark, "I bring you peace with honor," "Out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety."

That year I was allowed to travel up to Charing Cross on the train by myself for the first time, and feeling very grown-up and independent I met a school friend and we went to a movie in Leicester Square and had tea together afterwards. I was beginning to appreciate London. One of my cousins shared my interest in the ballet, and he occasionally took me to Sadlers Wells and Covent Garden. I had scrapbooks filled with pictures of the latest ballets and dancers, Lichine, Markova, Anton Dolin, and Margot Fonteyn. During the summer of 1939 my parents told me I would have to leave school that year to enable them to continue financing my younger brother's education. This news upset me and school seemed doubly pleasant that summer. We acted Shakespeare's *The Tempest* outdoors, worked hard for School Certificate, played tennis, and swam. Even the air-raid drills carried out at night appeared something of a lark. When the school year was over toward the end of July, I joined the rest of my family for the summer holidays. We went, as we had the previous year, to an isolated part of the Cornish coast where we rented a summer cottage. To fetch the mail and newspapers we had to row across an inlet of the sea and then walk through fields and woods to the village post office. When I heard from my father, who had fetched the newspapers, that Hitler had invaded Poland and war was imminent, I was sitting in the rowboat in the middle of the creek, idly letting the boat drift, talking to my brother, and not making much effort to row. That moment in the boat is fixed in my memory as ending my childhood, and the beginning of a different sort of life.

After that summer the family dispersed. My elder brother went away to join his regi-

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ment on Salisbury Plain, my younger brother went back to school. My father, much to my disappointment, refused to let us return to our house in Blackheath, and he and my mother and I stayed with relatives in the country waiting to see what was going to happen. Nothing did happen, no bombs dropped. In Guildford, where we eventually rented a house, I worked in a canteen and lived at home, where I found my father more and more difficult to get along with.

One evening he came home from work to find the household in chaos, and no dinner ready. My mother and a French lady who sometimes gave me conversation lessons were cutting out and making a dance dress for me all over the dining room table. He was extremely annoyed and lectured me, "The whole house is upside down because of you! The young men of this country are making sacrifices and it's time the girls did, too." The very sight of my lovely taffeta dress irritated him and he certainly did not want to hear about when I was going to wear it, where I was going, and with whom. The day ended in tears and recriminations.

THE government in 1941 started to conscript women between eighteen and thirty-five. Early in the year I joined the Woman's Royal Naval Service and soon found myself at a naval air station at Lee-on-Solent near Portsmouth. This was a large organization intent, among other things, on training young pilots straight from civilian life to fly the clumsy and obsolete Swordfish, Albacore, and Walrus aircraft. These planes were always falling apart on the ground, as well as in the air and on the sea. My job consisted mainly of sending messages by teleprinter to the Admiralty and aircraft factories listing defective parts, and explaining the whys and wherefores of the latest crash. The girls I worked with were largely the same race- and class-conscious types I had known at school. It took more than a war to make a dent in the rigid English class structure, and, as the navy loved protocol anyway, the whole thing was perpetuated in a host of small subtle ways. Girls who had been typists before the war joined the navy as "writers" and typed from nine till five. Coding and ciphering were supposed to entail a degree of intelligence only produced by a good education, so the daughters of admirals, commanders, and the upper classes generally found themselves in suitably genteel company, only once removed from the sixth form they had just left. Their ideas were more uniform than the navy-blue clothes we wore, and they never doubted they possessed an innate and unassailable superiority which allowed them to tolerate in a kindly way foreigners, Jews, and the lower orders. At Lee-on-Solent I lived in a stripped-down requisitioned hotel on the sea front, the Pier Hotel, in which half the girls at least were from lower-class homes; in this situation the elite smoothly sorted themselves out into little segregated pockets, eating at the same tables and sleeping in the same rooms.

Service life, so intimidating at first, acquired its own monotony after a while: rifle shooting practice on the airfield designed to help us repel an invasion that was hourly expected and never came; the air-raid siren and nights spent under the illusory protection of a flight of stairs; my constant preoccupation with the candy ration and what it could be traded for—half a night watch for two bars of chocolate; the asphyxiating rubbery smell of gas masks worn for half an hour a day during working hours; and the care with which I lined up for a small yellow ration sheet before going home for two days, which entitled my mother to buy at her grocer's a square inch of cheese and margarine and enough sugar for a cup of tea. All seemed as normal as the light of day after a year and a half. My secret ambition in those days at Lee was to go to New York, wearing my hair in a sophisticated topknot.

One day in November 1942 the yeoman came around to everyone in the signal office with a form on which we had to fill in "Yes" or "No" to the question, "Are you willing to serve overseas?" I was feeling fed

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up with Lee-on-Solent that day, wrote "Yes," and forgot all about it for three months. The following February the same yeoman came up and told me I would shortly be going abroad. My father was incredulous when I told him I would be leaving England in three weeks, and seemed to think I had acted wildly in putting down "Yes" on the forgotten form.

After a few days at home I went to a training center in London for a week. In Golden Square, a dubious neighborhood between Regent Street and Picadilly Circus, an overseas draft of three hundred Wrens was orientated, inoculated, and outfitted with unlikely looking sun helmets and a tropical uniform. The importance of security, loyalty, and not mixing with the natives was impressed upon us. It was a lighthearted and friendly week with girls from all over England, and we happily looked forward to a long stay in Ceylon, where, it was generally agreed, we must be going. Late one evening in an exaggerated atmosphere of secrecy we went in buses to Kings Cross Station, caught the night train to Gourock on the river Clyde beyond Glasgow, boarded a troopship, the former P & O liner Strathaird, and sailed in convoy with four other liners and some destroyers to an unknown destination.

For some reason I was the twentieth person allocated to a cabin for sixteen, so four of us slept on the floor. This was uncomfortable at first as the ship heaved up and down, but later, around the equator, it became a real advantage, being much cooler and more airy than in the bunks. Every morning I stacked my bedroll neatly in a corner ready for captain's rounds, and every night I unrolled it again like a little prayer mat. It was rough in the North Atlantic in February and I was seasick. The worst part was being herded regularly on deck for lifeboat drill, fully and correctly dressed and stuffed into bulky lifejackets. Vomiting in angles of the stairs, I would slowly ascend in line to the fresh air on the main deck, where we stood lined up like dummies staring at the huge waves. Although I was allowed to break ranks to throw up at the rail, the wind usually blew everything back onto my companions. I had never known such cold bleak misery and only wished to be home again.

In six weeks the convoy had rounded the Cape of Good Hope and stopped in Durban for three days. Half the contingent disembarked there and I found a vacant bunk at last. It was a relief to know I did not have to stay in South Africa. From what I saw of Durban, it appeared like one large prosperous country club whose white members enjoyed a leisurely social round. After a three-day orgy of candy, fruit, and overeating in restaurants ashore, we sailed north and headed for the Red Sea. The barren red cliffs of the Gulf of Suez closed in on the ship; Biblical and ageless, they were unlike anything I had seen before. At Port Tewfick in Egypt I went ashore and the next day arrived in Alexandria.

I always seemed to end up either living or working by the sea front. In Alexandria I worked in the basement of a flower-surrounded white villa, near the sea. This basement, which might have once been a kitchen I suppose, was now a highly efficient naval signal office in the charge of an irritable warrant officer, Mr. Porter, who had been in the Middle East too long and wanted to return to his family. He was skeptical of our abilities, did not believe in having women in the navy, and silently patrolled the room peering over our shoulders ready to pounce on any inaccuracy or mistake. He scared me for months. The villa was headquarters for Flag Officer Levant and Eastern Mediterranean. I never met this august gentleman, only his minions. All the big decisions and talk went on above, on the first and second floors. We in the basement merely sat surrounded by enormous code books endlessly coding and decoding.

The Allied invasion of Sicily and then Italy were the major excitements of 1943, and as the Egyptian summer descended like an oven there was no time for anything but the pressure of work and trying to survive the heat. I worked a system of watchkeeping

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in which I went on duty at midnight every fourth day. Keeping awake with strong tea and sticky Egyptian cakes, I worked through the night until five or six o'clock, when the sailors in the office announced it was "scrubbing out time" and would we please get out of the way for half an hour while they mopped the floor, tidied up, and made more tea. Tired and bleary-eyed, I would wander out through the flower garden, down the road, and onto the sea front, the curving white corniche which runs the length of Alexandria. The city, still sleeping, showed up at its best in those early mornings with a clarity and freshness missing in the dusty daytime. Underlying the charm and fascination of this flamboyant city was a sense of ancient evil.

My elder brother was with a Gurkha regiment in Burma, and I had written to him from the ship—I knew he had made the same voyage as far as Durban a year previously. In September, two months before he was killed, I had a cable from him for my twenty-first birthday and a letter:

"I am glad you enjoyed the voyage out. Durban is quite pleasant for a few days, but not a very exciting place to be stationed in. It should be very interesting at Alexandria, though probably very hot. . . .

"The last week here has been rather difficult. We have had some very jungley marches this last week, including climbing up to 8,000 feet. I saw leeches for the first time—caterpillar shape with rubbery bodies which stick on to you and suck your blood—we saw no Japs though. . . .

"I wish I was in your part of the world, but I shall come back that way sometime. . . ."

After living in Alexandria for over a year I heard there was a possibility of a few coders being transferred to the small naval base at Haifa in Palestine. I asked to be included in this draft if possible, and finally it was settled.

We left Egypt in June. The train from Alexandria traveled all day across the flat delta country, through ancient delta cities. Tanta, Benha, Zagazig, their names still recall the heat, and dust, and flies, the oppressive timelessness of Egypt. In Ismailia at sunset the smell of cooking oil rose from the streets, and just the other side of the canal, at Kantara, the train stopped to take on water before crossing the Sinai desert. It was a hot, gritty night journey across the desert, sitting wedged in our compartment, but with morning came a cool wind and the excitement and exhilaration of a new land. Lemon and orange groves lay on either side, their shiny leaves brilliant with reflected light; everything looked fresh and green. On Lydda station, where we ate big Jaffa oranges for breakfast, all the signs and notices were written in three languages, Hebrew, English, and Arabic.

From the railway station at Haifa we drove up through the town and on up and up along Mountain Road until the Mediterranean was spread out below and on the breeze was the resinous scent of pines. On the top of Mount Carmel I lived in a converted hotel with white balconies and a magnolia tree which partly blocked my view of the sea. Nearby, at the intersection of the two roads down into Haifa, was a small square with half a dozen stores along one side, a bookstore, and a fruit shop where I used to buy grapes. Looking through the books in the bookstore, I felt conspicuous and peculiarly out of place as the local residents called out "Shalom" on entering the store and stood about chatting to each other as though they were very sure that they belonged in Palestine. On Saturdays, when the stores were inexplicably closed, I stood among groups of people out strolling, and, listening to the German and Hebrew voices, I felt excluded, as if standing on the edge of a closed circle dedicated to one overriding idea and indifferent to all else. Walking along the roads on Mount Carmel past the new apartment buildings, I noticed the number of doctors, specialists, and lawyers living in the neighborhood; it seemed as if all the ability and intellect of Europe had been gathered into this one small area. People from all the cities of Europe were around

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me. I had never been in Europe, but on Mount Carmel it seemed very close, seen through Jewish eyes as somewhere to escape from.

Every day the naval truck took us to the dockyard, swaying down the hill at breakneck speed. The Palestinian sailors who drove had to assure us repeatedly of their skill before we got used to that precipitous descent into Haifa. Inside the dockyard destroyers returning from the Greek islands were tied up alongside the jetty just outside the signal office, and the crews would relax by sunbathing on deck. They told us how the starving Greek children on Khios and Kythera had eaten all their food and canned milk, and how some shore batteries in the Aegean were still firing on them. Messages came daily announcing the recapture of another Greek island from the Germans, and by October 1944 Greece was liberated and the islands free.

AT FIRST the only Jews I had a chance to talk to were the civilian radio operators at the naval base, who kept to a system of watchkeeping like ours and worked in an adjacent office. They were an interesting mixture. One of them, Fritz, always looked tired and discouraged and said the warm climate did not suit him. He liked to talk about Stettin, where he used to live. Another, who had been brought up in a kibbutz, told me how corrupt and unattractive city life appeared after the settlement, which for him, he said, was the only way to live.

A favorite expedition on days off was to set out early and hitchhike along the coast road to Tel Aviv. And although we never did anything in particular there, except walk along the sea front or sit in cafés eating ice cream and watching the people, I liked the dazzling newness, the optimism and vitality of the place, unbelievably different from those gray, withdrawn English towns I had known. Once I went to Tiberias, and in the still, airless humidity below sea level, explored along the edge of the lake through overgrown deserted citrus orchards, where I picked warm grapefruit off the trees and ate them as I walked. That was the longest summer, stretching out from Egypt to Palestine. It was summer when I swam at Alexandria in March, and in November it was still summer with swimming on beaches below the hills near Haifa.

Sometimes I went by bus to Herzl Street, and on one occasion went on from there into the old Arab quarter of Haifa. Here I might have been back in Egypt. There were the same Arabs smoking hubbly-bubblies, strange music, decaying houses, broken balconies and stairways, the whole picturesque jumble which fitted in so well with what English travelers to the Middle East always hope to find. Jewish Haifa with its stark white architecture contrasted dramatically with the Arab town and seemed divided from it not by a few hundred yards but by centuries.

A friend of mine, who before the war had lived with an elderly Hungarian Jewish couple in Manchester for several years, discovered that their nephew Karl lived in Palestine and was in the Jewish Brigade. He occasionally came to Haifa on leave and knew a number of people there. One evening he took us to the apartment of some friends of his from Vienna, the Steifs. I wanted to talk to Mrs. Steif, but she only spoke German and most of the conversation was carried on by Dr. Steif, a lawyer, who was an emphatic and voluble talker. He started each conversation by saying "I vill tell you somesing" in accents like those impersonations of my father's years ago, which conjured up a childish image so different from the kindness and hospitality of the Steifs. Listening to them talk about Vienna, Budapest, Zionism, and Israel, I began to understand something of the tremendous significance of this land to the descendants of generations of city dwellers from Europe. I often went to see the Steifs and met their young daughter Marietta. I still have a photograph of her in her ballet costume, smiling on their balcony in the sunshine.

Later on I met a Mrs. Koehler. I happened to sit next to her at a concert by the Palestine Orchestra one August evening.

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She was a large, friendly-looking person and, as we waited for the concert to begin, she complained of the heat in the crowded theater. I attempted a few German words in reply and then we talked some more about the music. We were both on our own and she seemed as pleased to have found someone to talk to as I was. After the concert was over we waited for the same bus to take us up Mount Carmel, and she suggested that we meet at her apartment once or twice a week so she could improve her English and I my German. I saw her every week after that until I left Haifa six months later. On each of those afternoons I walked out of quarters in civilian clothes, hurried up the road through a dark clump of pines, and then turned right onto the main road. It took barely five minutes, but I always arrived at her house elated as though I had somehow escaped.

I found Mrs. Koehler thankful to be in Haifa, so glad just to be there after the years in Berlin. She was constantly reiterating what a wonderful place Mount Carmel was, like a paradise for her, she said. When I compared her to the people I had known at home with their careful, well-mannered prejudices and limited outlook, they appeared to be living in a world of make-believe. In the struggle to reach Palestine there had been no room in her life for pretense, and to me she seemed more real than anyone I had known before.

In the middle of the afternoon while we were talking, her two boys would arrive home from school. Sun-tanned, laughing, and full of life, they were always amused to hear me speak German, and Puzi, the younger, would collapse into giggles at my accent until his mother, who treated our language sessions very seriously, sent them out to play. They looked such healthy, self-reliant children that I could easily understand Mrs. Koehler's enthusiasm for the kind of education they were being given, in which part of the day was devoted to practical work in the citrus groves and fields of the settlement. Peter, the elder one, was able to explain to me some of the farming problems on the coastal plain where his school was, and Puzi knew the names of all the wild flowers that grew on the slopes of Mount Carmel. They started a collection of pressed flowers, clearly labeled in an album for me to take back to England, leaving lots of space for the flowers they planned to find and send me after I had left.

My last weeks in Haifa were full of regret at the thought of leaving. *"Wunderbar, wunderschön"* was how the Koehlers described Mount Carmel, and in the clear light of January and February it was more beautiful than ever. The warm hillsides were covered with red and purple anemones and fragile cyclamen. The pervasive sunshine shut out everything except the immediate present and intensified my feeling of detachment from home. I felt closer to my friends on Mount Carmel than to my family whom I had not seen for two years, and I hated the thought of leaving.

Nineteen hundred forty-five was the first year I was old enough to vote, and I was determined to return to England and oppose my father by voting Labor. I was there for the General Election in June, but unfortunately the voting lists had been made up during my absence overseas and my ballot had been sent to my father who was supposed to determine my preferences by mail and mark it accordingly. He simply assumed that my preferences were the same as his and there was really nothing I could do about it, except wait five years for the next election, by which time I was married to an American who let me vote as I wished.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

MAKE MINE MANHATTAN

Guide to a Changing City

GERALD WEALES

I AM not quite a classic case. When I stepped off the train at Pennsylvania Station in September 1946, I was not carrying my few but spotless possessions in a cardboard suitcase; there were not even metaphorical bits of straw sticking to my clothes. I was not a fresh-faced innocent, the prototype of Nathanael West's hero in *A Cool Million,* about to be sacrificed to the wicked city, nor the male counterpart of the girl who sang, "You'd not dare molest me, sir, if Jack were only here." I was familiar with the surfaces, at least, of Chicago, San Francisco, London, Paris; I had even passed through New York City once —on my way to Europe and the war—and stopped long enough to eat a lobster and to see the last two acts of a bad play (Diana Barrymore in *Rebecca*).

Innocence would have been impossible even if I had never set foot in a city larger than Connersville, Indiana. I am speaking phenomenologically, not autobiographically. The innocent rube and the city slicker had died many years earlier. The novelists had long ago rediscovered sin in the small towns (what one New York-born editor still calls "peasant crime") and had helped to redress the urban-rural imbalance of sophistication. The gold-brick salesman had been gone for years from the Grand Central neighborhood, although he later turned up in Connecticut, operating from a real estate office.

If I am not quite a classic case, still I am almost one. If I knew something casually of cities that September at Penn Station, I did not yet know how to live in one or how to get to know that a city has a particular personality of its own. If I brought with me the kind of knowledge of human beings that the close-in living of a small town provides, I still did not know that there could be so many kinds of people (nationalities, races, economic stratifications) tumbled together so noisily, each holding on to bits of its past, even as it faded into an image of the whole. If I had discovered crustaceans on Fisherman's Wharf and eaten something called chop suey at the Bamboo Inn in Indianapolis, I was still virginal, as only a Midwesterner can be virginal, in the exotic world of international food. The new model outlander, with pizza in his hamburger joint and frozen blintzes and sour cream in his supermarket, may not be as gustatorially naive as I was when I arrived, but neither will he have the purity of palate that makes the finding of a new food so delightful.

I set out to discover New York. I do not know that I consciously avoided the places that, tourist-like, I should have gone to, but I do know that I have not yet made it to the top of the Empire State and that it was years before I risked going to the Statue of Liberty. When I did go it was on a holiday and the crowds drove me back before ever I made my way to the top, and I found solace in the wonderfully deserted caverns of the downtown commercial district. Mostly, I walked and looked, which is the only

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GERALD WEALES teaches English at the University of Pennsylvania and is now working on his first novel. Mr. Weales is familiar to COMMENTARY readers for his critical pieces on the theater, including his most recent one, "Thoughts on 'A Raisin in the Sun,'" in our number of last June.

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way to get to know a city. I ate busily and finally I ate carefully until I came to know the difference between a good knish and a bad one, between the best lobster sauce for shrimp (Shanghai style) and the standard Chinese-restaurant offering. I learned to know all the neighborhoods in Manhattan (by living in most of them) and to tell just where the Italian East Side shaded into the Jewish East Side and which Irish bars on Amsterdam Avenue had become Puerto Rican. I learned, most of all, that one can walk endlessly in New York City without ever getting bored. There were always streets that I had not visited, or not for so long that they had changed their faces; there were always new people, new shops, new surprises.

WHEN I began my explorations, there was no short cut to help me find my way. There were friends, of course, who had their own special corners of the city and who insisted that I see them and like them, but the untrustworthiness of enthusiasts has been common knowledge since the Children's Crusade. Now—and that's what I have been leading up to all this time—there is a very pleasant crutch to lean on. Kate Simon, who has been a New Yorker ever since she came from Warsaw as a child (no dates please), a woman who obviously loves the city even though she knows that it is "exhausting to visit and difficult to live in," has written what she calls "an uncommon guidebook," *New York, Places & Pleasures.**

Miss Simon's book is ostensibly for the casual visitor with a short time to stay in New York, that special visitor who knows that there are theaters and night clubs, who has found his way to all the standard tourist attractions and the famous stores, and who is looking now for an unusual walk, a small restaurant, an out-of-the-way shop. These Miss Simon provides in profusion and she accompanies her every suggestion with good and explicit directions about how to get wherever it is by bus and subway. Although very expensive establishments are described, many of the restaurants are reasonably cheap and there are pages of bargain stores and free (or inexpensive) entertainment.

One of the perennial difficulties with guidebooks is that the information is dated before the book ever reaches the hands of those who need to be guided. During my undergraduate days at Columbia, I remember fondly and compassionately, one guide listed a neighborhood tearoom, frequented only by poor but hungry students, as an excellent Japanese restaurant, and small clusters of Japanese tourists, their imitation German cameras about their necks, used to turn up on Morningside wearing looks of hope that quickly faded to bewilderment and despair.** Miss Simon is aware of the ephemeral nature of much of her information, so she runs up continual warnings to the reader, suggesting that he call (she usually gives phone numbers) and verify details of time, of place, of existence. She could not have foreseen that Joseph Papp and Robert Moses would have come to blows over Shakespeare in the park, but when she describes the New York Shakespeare Festival she warns that something disastrous may well have happened to her information between typewriter and bookstore.

There are a few genuine errors in the volume, perhaps planted for readers like me who can be expected to feel like bona fide New Yorkers for having discovered them. There is some confusion, perhaps typographical, about the details of the St. George's Day Parade (page 323), a mix-up which unfortunately moves the Cathedral of St. John the Divine from 110th to 101st Street. The Whitney Museum, page 106 notwithstanding, does not charge admission. If I were being picayune, I would call on everyone who struggled with me through "New York: Second Generation," the abstract expressionist show, to testify that the Jewish Museum does not limit its special shows to ritual and synagogue pieces (page 117), and I would ask fellow habitués of the Three Crowns to swear that it is physically impossible to "inspect on a once-around tour before you begin to heap your plate" (page 168), because one-half of the revolving table is always on the other side of the wall, being loaded with new delights. These are unimportant errors, however. The only real blooper that I found in the whole volume

*Meridian Books (Paperbacks), 347 pp., $1.95.

**I neglect to give the address here for fear that poor but hungry students will turn up only to find that it has become a beauty parlor.

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is Miss Simon's insistence that the tiglon—poor, dear, long dead, moth-eaten monster—is still one of the attractions of the Central Park Zoo (page 198). Perhaps she gets her zoo information second hand or perhaps she is simply not a zoo person. The latter seems likely since she wastes the zoos by putting them under the suggestions for children and since she fails to mention (don't tell me space problems: look how much she has to say about Klein's) my Central Park favorites: the yak with the crumpled horn and the gorilla ladies, Joanne and Carolyn, the most typical career girls in New York.

Now that I have finished showing off about the book's minor blemishes, let me get on to saying how very good it is and why. My obvious and personal pleasure in Miss Simon's guide lies in the fact that she so often mentions those streets that I like to walk on, those restaurants that I think of as being my own, those stores that I go to for special purposes. I may mix my delight in her long, detailed, loving account of the virtues of the Shanghai, an unequaled Chinese restaurant to which generations of Columbia students have flocked, with a fear that her book will double the crowds that already make it so hard to get a seat, but I cannot help feeling that it is high time someone said noisily just how good the food is there. I do not mean that we always see eye to eye (the Serendipity is not chic so far as I am concerned; it is chi-chi), but we do share enough sights and tastes to make me feel that her New York is also mine.

The three chief virtues of Miss Simon as a recorder of New York's pleasures are that she loves to walk, she loves to eat, and she writes amusingly of the people and the places in the city. Although she suggests that a ride on the Third Avenue bus from City Hall to 128th Street is an instructive delight (I would not touch it with a ten-foot exhaust pipe) and that one might see something from a car on one of the outer drives (but not driving the car), she chiefly advises the stranger to take walks. Although she guides the visitor through Greenwich Village and, less expectedly, past the millinery parts shops in the Thirties, her suggested walks are built for the most part around a national or racial section where special foods may be eaten, special products—clothing, toys, books—may be purchased, special festivals observed in season. She sends the reader to the Jewish Lower East Side, to the Italian and Slavic sections farther north, to the remains of the Greek neighborhood on Ninth Avenue and to the three Harlems (Negro, Puerto Rican, Italian). There is no quaint condescension in her fondness for these neighborhoods, but neither is there any self-delusion. Miss Simon recognizes what so many writers of guidebooks do not: that she is selling nostalgia. Any European guide leads the tourist to those parts of town that are oldest, those survivals that are farthest removed from the mid-century tempo of commercial living that does not differ all that much from New York to London to Tokyo. In the same way, Miss Simon points to those parts of New York where the marks of a dying way of life, the way of the immigrant, have not yet been erased. The peculiar color and vitality of each of these sections come from the ghetto-like concentration in which the people live or once lived. The increasing assimilation of later generations, the movement within and outside of Manhattan, the homogenizing effect of slum clearance, have all helped to remove the tightly national character of neighborhoods.

The sense of change hovers over Miss Simon's book like a warning and a promise. Most of the restaurants and the shops that she describes—at least those in the old neighborhoods—were born out of the need of a particular group of people. With the passing of the group, to the suburbs or the expensive melting pot of midtown apartment living, much of the special character of the old neighborhoods has died. Still more of it has disappeared under the iron ball that has knocked down the quaint tenements to make way for what we who never had to live in tenements like to call colorless housing projects. The paradox that plays through Miss Simon's book is the one that haunts anyone with a genuine love of New York, that the vigor of the Lower East Side, for instance, always had poverty as its mate. When Miss Simon writes of the Second Avenue where the Yiddish theater flourished and the Café Royal was an intellectual center, her pages give off a strong sense of something lost. Without really knowing the Yiddish theater

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and suspecting, from the remnant of it that remains, that it was probably less grand than the remembering heart insists, I still assume that it was more valuable than the musical comedy, written and performed by young matrons to raise money for the Reform Community Center out on Long Island; but I cannot honestly say that the conditions that produced a flourishing Yiddish theater on Second Avenue are preferable to those that give the matrons the leisure to dabble in amateur show business. The balance of loss and gain is a difficult one to weigh. It is not Miss Simon's business to drag out the scales; she has already gone beyond the call of guidebook duty when she recognizes that there is gain as well as loss in the changing of the old neighborhoods. She is free, then, to enjoy what remains and to show us where and how to enjoy it with her.

Most of the survivals are those that have outgrown their dependence on the originating group. Miss Simon's symbol for the internationalization which is part of the continually changing city is the egg rolls that she found with the sausages and clams at the *festa* of San Gennaro. She takes pleasure in pointing out blocks in which a kosher delicatessen, a Polish sausage store, an Irish bar, an Italian bakery, and a Chinese restaurant are all within hailing distance of one another. The ways in which New York neighborhoods change bring out the amateur sociologist in Miss Simon, as they do in all of us, a fact that makes all the stranger her neglect of the Upper West Side—from Columbia University south to the Seventies—as a place to walk. Here she could find the remains of the Irish and Jewish middle-class neighborhoods, heavy Puerto Rican and Negro populations (plantains and pig heads in the markets), fashionable effusions such as coffee houses (an Israeli one, for instance), and precious men's clothing stores, and a variety of names on store fronts that reads like a history of the settlement of New York. Still, the Upper West Side is an acquired taste, like handball, and does not have the immediate appeal of those neighborhoods to which Miss Simon directs the visitor.

I know of no one who writes with more affection than Miss Simon does about food. In her list of restaurants she pauses over those dishes which she likes best and makes them attractive with only a few adjectives to go on. She is willing to be pleased with fancy concoctions, but she returns again and again to good solid peasant food from whatever country—*paella,* say, or *cassoulet*—and embraces it as a real friend. She makes Katz's Delicatessen, down on Houston Street, sound more delightful than the Forum of the Twelve Caesars, even though the preciosity of the latter amuses her. She likes to poke into groceries and specialty food houses, to look into barrels and boxes, to duck beneath hanging cheeses and to look across acres of fish at Fulton Street at four in the morning. She can conjure up odors, textures, tastes. Her gustatory inclinations are so strong that her prose quickens in the section on unfrequented museums when she steps into the old kitchens of Dyckman House or the Van Cortlandt House museum. I am an eater myself and I agree—with a few qualifications—with most of her recommendations for places I know, and I trust her enough to risk the others. A bone or two I might pick (see what happens to the metaphors): most of the midtown Chinese restaurants are not really very good and that white stuff that drapes across the rock-heavy cakes in midtown cafeterias is not what I call whipped cream. These exceptions aside, I feel as I read her happy descriptions of food that she and I could make beautiful menus together.

Miss Simon's talents as a writer do not stop at the edge of the table. *New York, Places & Pleasures* is one of the few guidebooks that I know that can be read comfortably; I have just read through the 347 pages directly, as though the book were a novel, and although I do not recommend that it be taken in such a dose, I can testify that there was more fun than plodding in the task. Her descriptions of stores are aimed more at women than at men, sensibly enough since women are more likely to use her as a shopping guide, but now, after a page or two of Miss Simon, I know a great deal about strange operations such as the resale shops that dispense swanky used dresses on upper Madison Avenue. Part of her appeal is that she has sharp opinions on most everything and that acid occasionally creeps into her writing, especially when she is describing "the self-conscious belt" that is Greenwich Village; a guide who liked everything would

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not be much of a guide. There are amusing character sketches, some of them accurate, such as the one of the Jewish waiter as the Father, in the guises of doctor, disciplinarian, critic, and protector; and there are occasionally funny how-to pages, such as her directions for getting a seat in a crowded luncheonette.

Kate Simon's book is the only guide that I have seen that I would use for anything other than a source of addresses. If I were a casual visitor, which I have never been, I would use it to fill a few days with a quick, lush look at a fascinating city. If I were an innocent from the hinterland, which I have been, I would use it as an opening wedge to force myself into the heart of the city. If I were a New York adept, which I have been, I would study it for corners that I had somehow failed to turn. If I were an ex-New Yorker, which, alas, I now am, I would use it—as I will use it—to feed the kind of nostalgia that only someone who has really loved that city can know.

SPIRIT OF RABBI NACHMAN

HARVEY SHAPIRO

"The word moves a bit of air,
And this the next, until it reaches
The man who receives the word of his
friend
And receives his soul therein
And is therein awakened"—
Rabbi Nachman's preachment on the word,
Which I gloomily thumb
Wondering how it is with me
That I am not yet on the first
Rung (and many with me!).
To move a bit of air!

If a man ask, can he have
This thing, whether it be
An infusion of soul, or souls,
Steadfast to complete the journeying?
Words moving a bit of air
So that the whole morning moves.

Harvey Shapiro, who lives and works in New York City, has published his verse widely in such periodicals as *Poetry*, the *Quarterly Review of Literature*, *Epoch*, and the like. *The Book and Other Poems*, a collection, was issued in 1955 by Cummington Press. Formerly with the staff of Commentary, Mr. Shapiro has been for a number of years a regular contributor of verse to its pages.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

JOCHEBED MOURNS FOR MOSES

An Aramaic Hymn

CECIL ROTH, the historian, translates for this department a hymn from the Aramaic, commenting: "The traditional Jewish feast of Simhat Torah (the Rejoicing of the Law), which is celebrated on the last of the nine days of Succoth [this year October 25], is generally regarded as an occasion for almost unmitigated carnivalesque hilarity. Originally, however, there was combined with this a note of sadness, for the last chapter of the Pentateuch, which is read on this occasion, tells the story of the death of Moses. In some Jewish communities in antiquity, specially designated 'mourners' recited commemorative hymns in Moses' honor, and most rites contain elegies, some very moving, for recital on this occasion. This Aramaic hymn was probably composed in the early Middle Ages in south Italy or the Byzantine Empire; it is still recited in the Roman rite. Jochébed, the mother of Moses, is here depicted as having survived him, and going in search of him after his death." Jochébed is mentioned in Exodus (6:20) as the wife of Amram and the mother of Miriam, Aaron, and Moses; earlier in Exodus (2:1), she is spoken of as a daughter of Levi, but her name is not given. In the Talmud, Jochébed (the name has been thought to be of Egyptian origin) is identified by the rabbis as Shiphrah, one of the midwives ordered by Pharoah to kill all newborn male Hebrew children; but Shiphrah did not obey, and was therefore rewarded by God with a house of the priesthood, through Aaron, and a house of royalty, through Moses.—ED.

JOCHEBED went entreating of Egypt:
"Egypt! Egypt! hast thou seen my son Moses?"
"By thy life, Jochébed, I have not seen him again
Since the day when he smote the first-born in my land."

Jochébed went entreating Nile River:
"River! River! hast thou seen my son Moses?"
"By thy life, Jochébed, I have not seen him again
Since the day when he changed all my waters to blood."

Jochébed went entreating the Red Sea:
"Red Sea! Red Sea! hast thou seen my son Moses?"
"By thy life, Jochébed, I have not seen him again
Since the day when he led Twelve Tribes through my midst."

Jochébed went entreating the Desert:
"Desert! Desert! hast thou seen my son Moses?"

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"By thy life, Jochébed, I have not seen him again
Since the day when the Manna was spread over me."

Jochébed went entreating the granite:
"Granite! Granite! hast thou seen my son Moses?"
"By thy life, Jochébed, I have not seen him again
Since the day when he struck on me, twice, with his Rod."

Jochébed went entreating Mount Sinai.
"Sinai! Sinai! hast thou seen my son Moses?"
"By thy life, Jochébed, I have not seen him again
Since the day when he bore down the Tables of Law."

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Jewish Survival

To the Editor of Commentary:

In his brilliant article "Jewish Existence and the Living God" (August) Emil L. Fackenheim confronts the Jew with the religious question "Whether or not the Nameless can be present to us," and with the question of whether Jewish survival is a duty, and concludes: "He will have accepted himself as a Jew, because he will have accepted the time-honored Jewish obligation: to prepare and wait for the End in which all that is to be done by either man or God will be fulfilled."

To label this Messianic hope as post-Biblical or 20th-century Judaic is rather farfetched. Do we not find in Genesis Abraham's encounter where God says "And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed," containing a most universal divine promise? Furthermore, there has seldom been only *one* reason for Jewish survival in any given period. Each historical period had its particular survival reasons.

I rather think that in the "chain of survival reasons" each link is different. Up to the 19th century most Jews were of dogmatic Orthodox persuasion. . . . With the advent of the philosophic-scientific era, a diluted Orthodoxy set in. . . . To contend that today's 20th-century reason for survival is an answer to a religious choice is rather elusive. If it is "to be done by man," is that not a philosophy of humanism? If it is "to be done by God," is that not the Orthodox Messianic belief with which other Jewish exegesis has little in common?

Is not the reason for Jewish survival in our present age a secular one in a religious outer garb? Do we not live in an era of lost souls with a need for belonging, mitigated individuality, group consciousness, and psychological insecurity? Is not the choice of an "affinitive group cohesion" the answer to a technological age with its anxieties, rather than the outcome of an ideological struggle requiring dogmatic faith and theological knowledge? . . .

I. Geldzahler

Brooklyn, New York

Dr. Fackenheim *writes:*

A re-reading of my article will, I think, convince Mr. Geldzahler that it is not guilty of the errors with which he charges it. I did not deny the Biblical origin of the Messianic belief, nor the fact that there have been all sorts of reasons—real or ostensible—for Jewish survival in Jewish history. I merely asserted that it was only in post-Biblical times that, according to an inner logic, the Messianic belief moves into the center of Jewish existence. And as for non-religious reasons for Jewish survival, I merely asserted that these have never had—at least outside the State of Israel—an *ultimate* validity. Thus I might indeed agree that, so far as appearances are concerned, the reason today is, for the most part, "a secular one in an outer religious garb." But I would add that, wherever this secular reason has any strength and vitality, it is in turn a mere "outer garb" for an inner religious reason, whether this is admitted or not.

The core of Mr. Geldzahler's difficulty seems to be the radical alternative he sets up between "Orthodoxy" and "Humanism," between the belief that everything is to be done by God and the belief that everything is to be done by man. I deny the validity of this alternative, and I further deny that it is Jewish in character. Only a quite un-Jewish kind of Orthodox Jew could forget the vital and indeed Messianic significance of the *mitzvoth* which are to be done by man. And only a "humanist" who has wholly lost sight of the insights of Jewish tradition can imagine that all that is to be done can be done by man alone. I would not deny that, during an age of excessive optimism and romantic illusions, there have been many Jews inside non-Orthodox or even Orthodox congregations who have embraced this kind of humanism. But it is precisely because our age of crisis has made all of us aware of the limits of human power that I see a chance that the authentic voice of Judaism may once more be heard.

Israel and Hebrew

To the Editor of Commentary:

"Zion Revisited" by Dan Jacobson in your July issue calls for a reaction. I accept all his criticisms of the country, and some of its institutions certainly remind one of Chelm. . . . But the main point Jacobson wants to prove—

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namely that the sabras are not a normal people, that they carry the burden of the Galut, and that they remain restless—is a joke! Your readers have certainly met sabras—did they find in them an "anomaly of Jewishness"? . . . And since when was the Jewish State "expected" to be a home only for European ("white") Jews?

Jacobson (like Arthur Koestler) ridicules "the language no one else speaks on earth or wants to speak." How can the warm author of *The Zulu and the Zeide* talk about the greatest miracle of our time, the rebirth of the Hebrew language, in such terms? Ask De Valera and Nehru (who both tried in vain to revive archaic languages)! If you brush away all Israel's other achievements . . . and leave only the rebirth of the Hebrew language, only for this miracle—it was *kedai*. I think the greatest satisfaction in life a Jew can find outside Israel is to study and master this language; and then to read, for instance, in the original, the Bible, and all the wonderful literature around the Bible which has been written in this "spiritual center" during the last generation.

JOSE MIRELMAN

Tel Aviv, Israel

"New Yorker": Pro & Con

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

My warm congratulations to Hilton Kramer for his article "Harold Ross's 'New Yorker'" in your August number. I am sure Mr. Kramer will nevertheless take no offense if I note that the most apt characterization of the role of the *New Yorker* in American culture is still that contained in the two sentences which he quotes from Donat O'Donnell ["An important source of the *New Yorker's* financial strength today is that great class which thinks itself entitled not merely to appear but actually to *feel* cultured, without undergoing any dull and painful preparation, such as being educated. The conquest of this class was Ross's achievement"]. My own illustrations of the *New Yorker* technique—the air of languid boredom, the accuracy in small matters, the fundamental lack of understanding, and the subscription to conventional philistine values—would perhaps have been chosen from its political and international commentary and particularly from those Letters from everywhere. But I can make do with Mr. Kramer's examples.

OSCAR GASS

Washington, D. C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . The *New Yorker* has become a sort of intellectual's scapegoat, to be attacked not directly, but as Mr. Kramer does, with faint praise and civil leer. I want only to ask what other magazine has . . . consistently given us writers like J. D. Salinger, John Updike, Mavis Gallant, Janet Flanner, E. B. White, and Mary McCarthy? . . . Mr. Kramer [characterizes] the life which "the *New Yorker* advertisements and editorial departments have held up for a generation as an ideal" [as a] "life of languid, expensive, effete pleasures." Where does *Hiroshima* fit into this picture? Where the sternly moral criticism of Anthony West (how liberals winced at his attack on Orwell, one of the sacred cows of liberalism)? Where the sober, informative reporting of Berton Roueche, the poetic essays of E. B. White, the breathtaking digest of facts on radioactivity? . . .

Despite its defects, the *New Yorker* has a number of significant virtues, and would be harder to replace than some of the magazines which attack it with such bad humor and ill grace.

ANN WIDDITSCH

Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I thoroughly enjoyed Hilton Kramer's article, [but] I wonder whether Mr. Kramer's method isn't somewhat like looking too closely at a picture printed in a magazine . . . one gets only a blob of ugly dots. Move back . . . the picture is beautiful to behold.

Mr. Kramer remarks that Mr. Ross was not a very admirable man, personally or professionally. Maybe so, but it's a hollow point. . . . The magazine early transcended Ross the man. Ross thought of the *New Yorker* as a movement, and movement it became, though of a kind Ross would not understand. . . .

Using the incident of Harold Winney, Mr. Kramer suggests that the *New Yorker* inspired the fantasy life of ease and comfort ("Sports cars, the race track, champagne, parties"). I don't believe that the *New Yorker* inspired this kind of living any more than *Lady Chatterley's Lover* inspired adultery. . . .

What Ross *has* inspired, along with, admittedly, a good deal of reporting in tired phrases and bored attitudes, is some of the finest writing in the English language . . . [on] sex, politics, religion; on science, sociology, education, and the whole range of human interests. Nothing can take away from this accomplishment. Not even Ross; not even Hilton Kramer.

GILBERT SANDLER

Baltimore, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

After reading Hilton Kramer's attack—it could hardly be called a commentary—on the *New Yorker* and Harold Ross, I suppose I

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ought to feel ashamed. For not only do I look forward to the weekly version of that magazine, but I have also read and enjoyed James Thurber's *The Years with Ross*. . . .

If I understand the article correctly, the *New Yorker's* mania for technical perfection and complete factual accuracy . . . is clearly a bad thing, for, in Mr. Kramer's words, "Only where there is a deep-seated ignorance, abetted by a phony desire to appear completely knowledgeable, is factual error or some minor fault of usage an unforgiveable sin." . . . [Does this] imply that overstepping factual bounds is the mark of cultivation? From the shagginess of a good many "little" magazines in America, one is inclined to think these people feel a lack of concern with technical and factual matters is not merely a mark of cultivation, but the sign of a free spirit as well. . . . Mr. Kramer takes the *New Yorker* to task for what he feels to be its "phony and stilted" concept of sophistication; its refusal to discuss sex, politics, or religion, which Mr. Kramer feels to be the "guts" of sophistication. It was, of course, never the *New Yorker's* intention to discuss these things, as Mr. Thurber's book emphatically points out. After all, there are other journals for this . . . journals with completely different ends in mind. COMMENTARY is one. . . . There is some utter nonsense in the pages of the *New Yorker*. But there is also much that is extraordinarily fine. . . .

M. J. EPSTEIN

Little Rock, Arkansas

The Poet's Value

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The article in your July issue by Francis Golffing and Barbara Gibbs ("The Public Voice: Remarks on Poetry Today") seems to me to deal with the subject in a peripheral manner, too remote from any central, vital issue. Skillfully analytical in their assumptions, the authors do not seem as much concerned with value as they are with establishing categories in which, they feel, poetry finds itself today. . . . Aside from the fact that I find the vitality the authors attribute to the attitude expressed by one group (Ginsberg, Kerouac, and company) totally unconvincing, the entire process of "weeding out" and "grouping together" seems to me too private and arbitrary. . . . It seems to me impossible to bring a sense of unity, and with it clarity, to a topic when it is approached from an angle of separateness. To say that this poet is out to break down the fences separating him from "life" (a supposition I find difficult to grasp) and that that poet is writing merely for the "act" of writing (a frivolous excuse not worthy anyone's attention, it would seem to me) puts the emphasis too heavily on mannerism and cause. This seems to me contrary to the position of the poet—perhaps more isolated but in evidence in every age—who has never willed himself into the service of poetry but has somehow found himself there, and having discovered his allegiance, has never been satisfied merely to establish some personal motif (which he does easily) but has struggled desperately to serve, as best he can, the impersonal demands of poetry itself. "Not by wisdom do poets write poetry but by a sort of genius and inspiration" (Plato in the *Apology*).

A more fundamental, a more traditional approach is no doubt possible when dealing with "the reality of verse." Can poets not be evaluated in terms of the excellence of their service (and here I mean the range they can reach in exploring the art they serve)? It seems to me in evaluating trends in poetry in any given period, a fundamental direction has always mattered. Proceeding on the assumption—a safe one, I believe—that the "fire" of poetry would not be kept alive but for those men and women, however few, who serve it, is it not these poets, poets who take their art to its furthest possible limit, who take it so far that it transcends itself as a conscious art; is it not those poets who transcend the (perhaps?) necessary fences by linking their art to the most secret, the most hidden and at once most lofty recesses of the human insight out of which poetry surely comes and which it seeks to praise and immortalize, poets who in short are endowed to keep alive poetry's most fundamental and singular tradition: to *illuminate;* is it not these poets who carry on the single direction that has mattered and—can there be any doubt of it?—matters still? I am sure the authors, themselves distinguished poets, would agree.

Any investigation into the vitality or, as the authors put it, the reality of verse, ought therefore to clarify how effective or how ineffective poets are today in keeping alive this single tradition. How effective *are* America's poets today in recharting poetry's "grand dimension," *grand* whether the expression be lyrical, tragic, metaphysical, etc.? This is a question I wish the authors would explore—they are certainly qualified to do it.

ARTHUR GREGOR

New York City

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Jewish Nationalism

THE ZIONIST IDEA: A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS AND READER. Edited and with an introduction and notes by ARTHUR HERTZBERG. Doubleday and Herzl Press. 638 pp. $7.50.

Reviewed by MILTON HIMMELFARB

NOTHING fails like success. The old Zionist activists are mostly apathetic or splenetic, the old theorists mostly silent. Was it dissatisfaction with the present and a desire to recall past glories that prompted the Zionist cultural enterprises in this country to publish a source book of Zionist thought? Whatever the reason, the result is a good reader preceded by a first-rate intellectual history, Rabbi Hertzberg's long introduction.

It was not an easy history to write. As Rabbi Hertzberg says, for the general historian Zionism is too Jewish and for the Jewish historian too general. Zionism also was different things to different men, offering different satisfactions for different needs. From the points of view of Jewish status and identity, Zionism was revolutionary and conservative—messianic and defensive, in Rabbi Hertzberg's language—in varying proportions, among varying groups, at various times. Much of the impulse for the revolutionary deeds and words of one group of Zionists, like Mr. Ben Gurion's generation, might come from rejection of the tradition, but on another group those deeds and words could have the conservative effect of strengthening Jewish pride and slowing the flight from tradition. In short, Rabbi Hertzberg's subject is slippery with paradox, subtlety, and dialectical inversion, but it is held firmly and we are shown what it is made of.

To know the body of thinking from which the specimens in this book were chosen, and to know modern history, general and Jewish, was not enough. Rabbi Hertzberg also had to know, or feel, how much the Emancipation and Enlightenment of the 18th and 19th centuries marked a break with all preceding Jewish history. He had to know, or feel, how much the crisis brought about by that break was at bottom a crisis of religious faith. And he had to resist the temptation of preaching.

The only significant evidence of his religious outlook that he lets appear is a hint of malice in his treatment of Ahad Ha-am—the agnostic rabbi, as he calls him. He is enjoying himself when he exposes the weak foundations of a moralism, an appeal to the Spirit, and a doctrine of chosenness that are sundered from belief; and he goes perhaps a little too far in linking Ahad Ha-am's thought with his class bias, representing him as a spokesman for the upper class of scholars and respectable householders against the common mass.

In this Rabbi Hertzberg cannot escape paradox himself, for while the intellectual attack of Ahad Ha-am has been revived in several quarters lately, Hertzberg's own rabbinical tradition acknowledges a special debt to the agnostic rabbi—another paradox. In the end, however, Rabbi Hertzberg does not let his distaste stand in the way of recognizing an ironical triumph. Herzl's Zionism was very different from Ahad Ha-am's, yet Mr. Ben Gurion, a distinctly Herzlian type, has had to become a sort of latter-day Ahad Ha-am.

Herzl is not let off more easily in substance, even if he is treated more gently in manner. Rabbi Hertzberg clearly admires Herzl for his vision, his temperament, his aristocratic liberalism. He understands how a rational and liberal man of Herzl's time and place could "understand" anti-Semitism so well that he could negotiate with the Czar's minister. But in the end, he says, Herzl's Zionism, so far from being too pessimistic about the future of the Jews in Europe, was too optimistic. Herzl had faith in rational self-interest, which he thought would persuade both the government and the Jews of a land like anti-Semitic Russia to cooperate in Zionism as a solution equally advantageous for both. He could not imagine the anti-Semitism of a Hitler.

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One of the most striking regularities that emerges from Rabbi Hertzberg's history is that of disillusion leading to nationalism. In the early 1880's the highly Russified Leo Pinsker was stirred not so much by the brute fact of the pogroms that followed Alexander II's assassination as by the silence or approval or even participation of enlightened and educated Russians, including Populists. The result was his *Auto-Emancipation*, of which Herzl was to say that if he had read it he would not have felt it necessary to write his own *Judenstaat*. Herzl himself, the good European, was transformed by the Dreyfus case. Rabbi Hertzberg does not stress it, but much the same sort of thing happened after the Kishinev pogroms in 1903, which many Russian radicals welcomed as a wholesome sign that the peasants were at last expressing their discontent in action. A Jewish radical in America spoke bitterly of the "nationalist epidemic" that followed, and another later wrote that with Kishinev his own "previous cosmopolitanism, internationalism, and similar ideologies vanished at one blow."

The regularity of disillusion leading to nationalism and Zionism's victory over competing kinds of Jewish nationalism may account as much as direct evidence for the Israelis' conviction that the great mass of Jews in the Soviet Union are longing to go to Israel. It is true that while Stalin's pogrom was hot and Khrushchev's is cold, Russian Jews remain disillusioned with egalitarian promises. It is also true that they seem to have arrived at a new Jewish self-awareness, though without religious or cultural content. But is it true that most of them long to go to Israel, or to emigrate at all? The Israelis are probably taking a wish for a fact, and they are probably also seeing reality ideologically.

Not so Rabbi Hertzberg. Without discussing the Soviet case at all, he knows a wish from a fact. He feels in his bones how much change there has been since the late 19th century, when power, civilization, and modernity were claimed and conceded as the property of European Christendom. He insists that what is characteristically modern in modern Jewish thought is the blending of messianic and defensive elements; he considers Zionism to be the most impressive example so far; he is certain that the future of Jewish thought is to continue blending messianism and defensiveness, in ever more complex ways; but he is careful not to call that future by the name of Zionism.

Nietzschean Hardheartedness

FROM SHAKESPEARE TO EXISTENTIALISM. By WALTER KAUFMANN. Beacon Press. 404 pp. $4.95.

Reviewed by HENRY DAVID AIKEN

PROFESSOR KAUFMANN'S new book purports to trace a grand historical development of ideas; actually it is only a collection of scattered essays and reviews, most of them previously published during the last ten years. These papers deal, casually and discursively, with a number of vaguely related historical, philosophical, religious, and aesthetic questions that are raised or prompted by authors widely separated from one another in time, nationality, vocation, style, tradition, and interest. The authors include Shakespeare, Goethe, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Rilke, Jaspers, Heidegger, Freud, and Toynbee—all of whom, in Kaufmann's mind, have something to do (pro or con) with the evolving Aristotelian-Nietzschean ideal of the "great-souled" or "superior" man. According to Kaufmann, this ideal was anticipated in the writings of the greatest Greek philosophers, forgotten by the medievals, recovered and deepened by Shakespeare, provided with an exemplary life in the person and writings of Goethe, systematically misrepresented by the early Romantics and by such essentially Romantic existentialists as Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and Jaspers, apotheosized by Nietzsche, provided with a certificate of good health by Freud, and, most recently, obfuscated and falsified in the grand manner by Toynbee. The fundamental traducer of this ideal (which also emerges in the 19th century as the ideal of the "good European") is not Nazism or Communism, but Christianity, which Kaufmann holds responsible not only for the major counter-ideals of otherworldly faith, hope, and charity, but also for proposing a "warped and tendentious view of the present age" and a gargantuan "falsification" of cultural history.

The opening chapter, "Shakespeare: Between Socrates and Existentialism," sets the tone of the book. Kaufmann approaches Shakespeare primarily as a metaphysician and moralist, but the "truth" which he professes to find in that great "pagan" is rather casually extracted from individual sonnets and speeches. He is, for example, much enamored of the 94th

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sonnet, which he considers a celebration of the hopeless, faithless, this-worldly individuals "Who, moving others, are themselves as stone, / Unmoved, cold, and to temptation slow. . . ." He cites such plays as *Timon* to demonstrate "Shakespeare's acid contempt for men and women," and links this with Aristotle's "great-souled man," who is "justified in despising other people—his estimates are correct." According to Kaufmann, "Shakespeare, like the Greeks before him and Nietzsche after him, believed neither in progress nor in original sin; he believed that most men merited contempt and that a very few were head and shoulders above the rest of mankind and that these few, more often than not, meet with 'base infection' and do not herald progress." The prerogative of these few, he says, is tragedy. *The* tragic world view, we are told, "involves an ethic of character, not, like the Gospels, an ethic of otherworldly prudence." "The tragic hero has no reward." "The tragic view knows, as Christianity does not, genuine self-sacrifice."

Kaufmann holds, with Aristotle, that only heroes are capable of tragic action and suffering. Yet tragedy, in Shakespeare as well as in much modern literature, is an inclusive concept which can embrace not only kings and princes, but also the lives of fools, courtiers, confidants, and innocent bystanders who "merely swell a scene or two." Shakespeare, as many have pointed out, could put himself in the place of almost any human being. He can as powerfully represent the faith that there is a "special providence in the fall of a sparrow" (with its unmistakeable allusion to Matthew 10:29) as Macbeth's supposedly "great insight" that "Life's but a . . . tale, told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

It seems to me that the facts of suffering—lost opportunity, defeated hopes, and, generally, wasted good—constitute the stuff of tragedy, rather than the height from which the individual falls, his lordly capacity for contempt, or his lack of prudence. Nor is Christianity notable among the world religions for its celebration of prudence; I associate that virtue with the secular utilitarian ethics of Bentham, Hobbes, and even Aristotle himself. And for that matter, why is it not possible to view the Christ story, like the myth of Prometheus, as tragic? Nothing in Aristotle, at least, precludes the possibility that tragedy should be accompanied by redemption. I fail to see why the concept of the tragedy of human existence should be the exclusive prerogative of the Nietzscheans. In fact, all this talk of tragedy is fatiguing. What is so wrong with, say, Mill's or Dewey's temperate faith in progress or their generous hopes, not only for themselves, but for the ruck of mankind? "Ripeness" is by no means all, save for those who have only their ripeness to cling to.

The next four essays deal with various aspects of Goethe's work, life, and influence. In Faust, according to Kaufmann, Goethe failed to create a "titan" of Hamlet's heroic stature. Faust's practice of magic "does not serve to elevate him to superhuman stature; the word *Ubermensch* (superman) is actually used mockingly by the Earth Spirit, whose sight Faust cannot bear." Because Faust is in the end incapable of titanic, tragic action, because he is "merely human," Kaufmann is forced to distinguish the portrait of Faust from the Olympian image of Goethe himself. Goethe is represented in his ripe old age as being, along with Hegel and Nietzsche, the great opponent of romanticism. His life and art are made to stand as permanent rebukes to those sick romantic souls who turned their backs upon the Enlightenment and sought spiritual peace and intellectual stability in medievalism.

When Kaufmann comes to another of his anti-romantic heroes, Hegel, he represents him as a writer whose intellectual life was virtually split in two. The early Hegel, whose anti-romantic opposition to Christianity and its fruits was blemished only by an unaccountable anti-Semitism, is presented for our approval as an admirer of Goethe, and as an exponent of the ancient pagans who "are our models today in all that is great, beautiful, noble, and free." The mature Hegel, on the other hand, wasted his time as a philosopher of history trying to find "the epitome of reason in his Christian heritage and . . . his own philosophy implicit in the ancient dogmas."

Laudably, Mr. Kaufmann has added his bit toward the restoration of Hegel's reputation as a "good European," rebuking those critics, like Karl Popper, who find in his writings merely a paradigm of irrationalism and totalitarianism. Though not an original commentator on the "Hegel myth," Kaufmann makes a fair case of showing that even Hegel's mature ethical and social philosophy is by no means an uncritical

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defense of statism, militarism, or racism. Hegel is not, of course, an individualist, but neither does he hold that the state, even in his own idealistic sense of the term, has any right simply to dictate what men are to believe or do. And if he sometimes sentimentalizes the state in his attempt to view it as the historical embodiment of an underlying spiritual goal, this weakness may serve to offset the countervailing error of those English and American political philosophers who view the state as completely unspiritual, a necessary evil at best, and who regard the arts of government and politics, in Santayana's phrase, as "servile arts," unworthy of the efforts of talented and civilized men.

On this level, Kaufmann undoubtedly helps set the record straight. But when it comes to the more technical aspects of Hegel's philosophy, he is given to sweeping critical judgments which involve him in contradictions. Consider, for instance, the celebrated Hegelian dialectic. Kaufmann tells us that "The triad of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis is encountered in Kant, Fichte, and Schelling but mentioned only once in the twenty volumes of Hegel's works." This stunning point of fact serves to distract us from more exigent questions concerning the real nature and merit, if any, of the Hegelian dialectic or logic. On these questions, Kaufmann has little more to say than that ". . . Hegel's contribution consists in his transformation of Fichte's and Schelling's arid dialectic into a logic of passion (cf. Chapter 8, section 16)—a stroke of genius, though the transformation was unfortunately only half accomplished by him and was not completed by any of his successors." When we turn to Chapter 8, section 16, what we find is not a detailed explication of Hegel's alleged stroke of genius, but six short paragraphs that inform us, in a summary of Hegel's opinions concerning Christianity, that "Instead of achieving a crowning synthesis, he unwittingly illustrated his own dialectic by overreacting against the views of his youth, and by going to the opposite extreme." In the next chapter, we are startled to find that one of Hegel's great faults is "the pseudo-precision of his dialectic." Hegel's "imposing deductions are not compelling," says Kaufmann, for "Hegel failed to distinguish between giving some reasons for a development and demonstrating its necessity." Kaufmann never explains Hegel's "stroke of genius" and why or how he improved upon the allegedly arid dialectics of his predecessors. His vindication of Hegel against Popper includes no reply to Popper's important criticisms of the incompetence of Hegel's discussions of natural science and its methods. From Kaufmann's standpoint, what matters is that Hegel "always remained the heir of the Enlightenment, opposed to romanticisms and theology alike, insofar as he maintained until the end that there is one pursuit that is far superior to art and religion: philosophy."

And so it goes. As one continues, page after tendentious, score-keeping page, through the endless defenses of Nietzsche and Freud and the attacks on Kierkegaard, the German existentialists, and Toynbee, it becomes increasingly clear that what Kaufmann has really given us is a kind of anti-morality play whose pagan heroes are crucified by a horde of Christian-romantic pharisees. While I agree with some of his appraisals of Kierkegaard, Jaspers, and Heidegger, his eleventh chapter, "How Nietzsche Revolutionized Ethics," seems to me slight and unconvincing, and his chapter on Freud misses much of the complexity of Freud's views concerning ethics and religion. Did Freud unambiguously oppose all traditional moral codes and precepts? And did he unambiguously celebrate the virtues of the "healthy" un-neurotic soul? I do not myself believe that he did.

In his "Dialogue with a Critic," Kaufmann's *Author* concludes by saying, "Being right matters less than making people think for themselves. And there is no better way of doing that than being provocative." Well, in a way, Kaufmann has succeeded, for he has made me see how little I aspire to be, on his terms, an enlightened, "healthy soul" who views moral codes as mere "symptoms of imperfect health and self-deception." Although I myself have been known to admire some of the ideals which Mr. Kaufmann advocates, or at least the abstract nouns which he uses in referring to them, his advocacy has served rather to chill than to warm my heart toward them. And although I have been, within certain well-defined limits, an admirer of the writings of Nietzsche, Freud, and even Hegel, his presentation of their virtues has tended, if anything, to diminish my regard for and even my interest in them. How much more attractive is the plain-spoken urbanity, the perhaps uninspired but livable utilitarianism, and the unobtrusive good will and veracity of the British Empiricists, Locke, Hume, and Mill, to the fire-eating, chest-

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thumping doubletalk and egoism of their 19th- and 20th-century German opponents. I share Kaufmann's admiration for the great tragedians, ancient and modern; yet his unfeeling disdain for lost souls who hope without hope and have faith in what they themselves admit to be "absurd," makes me see how easy it is to pass by degrees from a noble and tragic philosophy to a Goethean and Nietzschean hardheartedness which I, at least, find repellent. All unwittingly, Kaufmann has taught me to understand the courage and wisdom of those exponents of the lost generation who openly pitied themselves, and he has made me see that he who has no pity for himself is likely to have no true compassion for others.

City People in Tight Places

THE LITTLE DISTURBANCES OF MAN. By GRACE PALEY. Doubleday. 189 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by ISA KAPP

MRS. PALEY'S stories are about city people in tight places and rushed moments, and she tells them, from the first phrases, with great urban momentum and no rural moonshine. "My husband gave me a broom on Christmas. This wasn't right. It wasn't meant kindly," she begins, sweeping out a few decades of precious, poker-faced American short story openings. Or: "Anna saw him straddling the daffodils, a rosy man in his third flush of youth. He got into Judy's eye too. Acquisitive and quick, she screamed, 'There's Daddy.'"

As one husband after another showers, shaves, and permanently leaves the close nest of his wife's affection, Mrs. Paley dwells not so much on the grief as on the resilience of the victim, the note of hilarity in her groans. In "An Interest in Life," the deserted mother of four children hopes by virtue of her poignant condition to appear on the radio program "Strike It Rich," but a gentleman friend reprimands her: "Virginia, for goodness' sakes . . . you don't have a ghost. They'd laugh you off the program. Those people really suffer . . . their lives are washed off by floods—catastrophes of God." And for her meaner woes, "the little disturbances of man," he recommends more accessible consolations.

A little disturbance does not mean a contemptible one, and private sorrows are not degraded in these pages to the rank of Problems. The only villain to be found is the social worker from Welfare who scribbles a dozen pages in his notebook when a family's burden is lightened by the gift of a record player. But Mrs. Paley is not out to claim justice, or even to reform social workers, only to give grave but wisecracking accounts of urban romance and unsentimental education somewhat in the tone, though not with the evangelistic motive, of Paul Goodman.

Several of the stories take place against a Jewish background, but the writer does not make a solemn issue of Jewishness, even though it may burst excitably into a conversation she reports. In "The Loudest Voice," told by a schoolgirl, the parents' dilemma is: what would be a dignified way for them to talk about their children's appearance in the Christmas play? More important, can they, the parents, avoid being seduced by the Spectacle and by the ringing sound of Meyer's, Ira's, and Shirley's audible voices across the footlights?

In "Goodbye and Goodluck," a tale of a pleasant but interrupted liaison between a prominent actor and chubby ticket-taker in the Second Avenue Theater, Jewishness is not a question of pride or defense, but simply the landscape in which the story moves. It is hard to be sure there is such a thing as national inclination in basic matters like love and money, but I think we can recognize the air of comfort and felicity with which Mrs. Paley endows Jewish romance. In the Jewish tradition, love and sex seem to be only one part of the ambition to make a good living, have company, eat well and regularly. They are no more dark and sinful than these other familiar appetites. The actor, Vlashkin, in his sixties but now divorced, makes Rosie Lieber a final proposition. "What a woman should be to a man, you were to me. Do you think, Rosie, a couple of old pals like us could have a few good times among the material things of this world?" Still warm and unconventional, but frank, Rosie answers, "But now, Vlashkin, you are a free man. How could you ask me to go with you on trains, to stay in strange hotels, among Americans, not your wife? Be ashamed."

Despite this late moment of mild opportunism, Rosie's uncomplaining affection represents Mrs. Paley's notion about the proper stance of Woman, a rare one in American life if we are to judge from novels, movies, and business. We celebrate in our women hard-

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headedness, efficiency, and economy of emotion, the cool qualities of the "operator." The open-hearted heroine of the Broadway play *Two for the Seesaw* is for us a problem type, defenseless and slated to lose the hero. Mrs. Paley celebrates instead an old-fashioned virtue, simple generosity, the impulse not to make reservations in one's feelings toward another person. Her women are not maudlin, because they rarely feel martyred or misused. They are often down, but never out.

As a female reader, I have to take pride in a woman writer not committed to the idea that men who refuse to fall in with women's plans are necessarily childish or unhinged. A few stories are amusingly written from the point of view of resistant and self-protecting males. Dotty in "The Contest" woos her recalcitrant Freddy with love, with seeded rolls, and eventually with entry into a Jewish newspaper contest that may win him a trip to Israel if he is married to her. Though she pursues her biological destiny with all the vital force of Shaw's heroine in *Man and Superman,* her impetus only elicits Freddy's brief postcard: "No can do."

"Why do you think she liked me?" Freddy, who has taken advantage of Dotty's kindness, asks the reader. "All you little psychoanalyzed people, now say it at once, 'Because she is a masochist and you are a sadist.'" "No," he insists, "I was very good to her," and Dotty backs him up, appreciating his readiness to converse when she is feeling depressed.

It may be that choosing the good-natured philosophical view instead of the knowing psychological one keeps Mrs. Paley from condemning people for the way they are built. Her stories are subtitled "of men and women *at* love," which implies with humorous precision that many of man's emotions are not in the extreme center of love, but at its brink, in its vicinity; that one need not therefore diminish or excoriate them or be bitter.

The stories in *The Little Disturbances of Man* are of miniature importance because they never get far enough away from coffeepots, diapers, and householdly feelings; also, they are always oddly slanted to one corner, as if to say "I don't pretend to be cosmic." But the writing itself is extraordinarily good—intent, clear, and weeded-out as poetry, but moving

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in the more companionable meters of prose. I was awed by Mrs. Paley's command of street language, including the standard four-letter words, which she uses judiciously and without affection when they seem suitable. She has also done well by the general language of literary love in the Western world by shifting it a few inches away from the romantic darkness and the gynecological light, toward the agitation of the mind, the limbs, and the funny bone.

Mass Culture and the Good Life

THE IMAGE INDUSTRIES. By FR. WILLIAM LYNCH, S.J. Sheed and Ward. 159 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by RICHARD HOGGART

READING books about mass entertainments is, in the long run, exceptionally depressing. Taken separately, they are often peculiarly fascinating—crammed with curious detail and illustration, and sometimes brilliantly perceptive in their individual observations. But as a body they leave one feeling further than ever from understanding what are, after all, the only important questions about mass entertainments: what do they tell us about ourselves, and about the tendencies of our societies? There are practically no commonly agreed points for literary-critical or social judgments, no tools and no frame. What we tend to get ranges between these two extremes: hair-raising exposés erected against a pasteboard background of trite moral assumptions, or witty and acute exercises within a philosophic vacuum. It's by and large a world of unexamined assumptions or refusals to assume anything.

There are some kinds of assumption which don't depress in this way, are comparatively easy to allow for, and can sometimes illuminate by contrast. For instance, it seems roughly true to say that there is a difference in the way people on opposite sides of the Atlantic tend to approach mass entertainments. On the whole, American writers begin with more sympathy for them than Europeans. Of course this doesn't stop Americans from being highly critical and some of them even outdo the Europeans in their high bourgeois stance. But by and large Americans are less hostile initially to mass entertainments, readier to make allowances, less likely to work from behind some initially assumed class or cultural-minority barrier. Presumably this is connected with the differences between American and European attitudes to "the common man," with the Americans' confidence that people will work the dirt out of their own laundry, and their suspicion of the claims of any elite. The brisk air of most essays in, for instance, *Mass Culture* (Free Press, 1957) wouldn't have been evident in a European anthology.

By contrast, a typical European writer on mass entertainments has something of the air of the boy with his finger in the dike, or of someone defending "Western values" against the new barbarian hordes. He tends to assume a hieratic, a culturally aristocratic posture. At the best we have Ortega's *Revolt of the Masses* (and Eliot's *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* is a remarkably cogent European-style book here). But the general attitude runs right into the hinterlands of opinion. The contrast shows even in lecture audiences on the two continents. In my experience an American audience at a talk on mass entertainments (especially from an Englishman) soon begins to seem uneasy, as though they suspect you are about to make a nasty snobbish attack on the nice guy next door. European audiences—especially teachers; I've felt this response from teachers in Stuttgart as in Manchester—seem to be silently inviting you to do your worst in describing the horrors of the pleasures of "the masses"; and sometimes in the discussion afterward they bear witness that they are, stoically but unexpectantly, doing their bit by insisting on teaching Latin in the Sixth Form, in spite of the "telly," the *Daily Mirror,* and the technologists.

Americans will be able to say for themselves whether European assumptions illuminate parts of the subject for them. Certainly Europeans can learn a lot from the initial American sympathy. Our sense of separation often inhibits us from simply taking the trouble to get to know as much as most American writers about the sheer detail of mass entertainments, the immense variety of styles and standards within them. We approach them as if we're looking for clinical specimens; and our samples are often simply accidental. More important, we judge them and their audiences from a position so far outside, imaginatively and emotionally, that we partly misjudge them. Worse, some of those Englishmen who do know a lot of the detail and insist that they are, in spirit,

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"one of the boys" are really showing only an unsavory form of intellectual's low-browism.

But the really disconcerting quality in much of this writing (from both continents) is that lack of an adequate frame of reference, artistic or moral, which I mentioned earlier (naturally there are a few good exceptions). For I don't see how you can discuss mass entertainments without trying to get, before or in the process, some notion of good critical standards and some notion (obviously it needn't be made explicit in general assertive statements) of what you believe to be—yes—the good life.

What, in fact, do we usually find? Direct moralistic disquisitions which are heavy with unimaginative good intention but factually and artistically ill nourished. With these, *The Robe* is "wholesome" because it "promotes wholesome attitudes." There is some good Catholic writing on general aesthetics; there is practically no good Christian or directly moralistic writing on mass entertainments.

Then there are those massively documented volumes, often by university professors of "communications"—who know every single one of the trees but reject any "evaluation" of the wood. They are not even old-fashioned direct moralists; they simply accept, and do the documentation for, whatever the businessmen or the bureaucrats have thrown up—20th-century Dr. Panglosses, oiling the big machines.

Then come the writers of intellectual horror comics, who cash in particularly on the American taste for harrowing exposures of the American plight. They have things both ways; they release floods of scarifying evidence and heart-warming righteous indignation, in manners which—they have learned from the mass entertainers themselves—make for quick but not lasting effects and large immediate sales. *The Hidden Persuaders* is one of this type. But the trickiest of all are those books which show considerable aesthetic insight and brilliantly sharp and witty individual perceptions, but whose authors are so anxious not to be caught short in a moralizing or rhetorical position that they adopt a manner so brittle, so crackling, so "knowing" that you soon feel as though you've stayed too long at a cocktail party eating savory little nothings until your stomach aches for a square meal. The last thing any of them are happy to be found doing is relating what they say, even by implication, to judgments of value about men and their relationships.

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This is a long preamble to what set out to be a review, but I think justifiably long. For reasons which will now be clear I approached this book, since it is by a Jesuit priest and has a catchpenny title, with no great expectations. But I ended it with a feeling of considerable admiration.

Father Lynch sets out to do two main things. First, to show that creative artists, critics, and what he calls "speculative theologians" can work together in exploring mass entertainments, because they should have in common a sense of "the reality of man" (his variety and complexity, his freedom and responsibility, his splendors and miseries), and so a common concern with the imaginative life of society. In doing this he hammers at the inadequacies of his fellow theologians much more than at the inhibitions of the critics.

Second, he selects four major characteristics of mass entertainments, each of which he sees doing violence to the qualities named above: the blurring of reality with fantasy; the flattening out of feeling; the reduction of imaginative freedom, and gargantuanism (the spectacular and sensational). Incidentally, how aptly they all apply to, in particular, Disney and especially to his latest opus, *The Sleeping Beauty*. In separate chapters Father Lynch illustrates these qualities, in detail, from films and television programs most of us will know.

The book is deliberately short and in parts confessedly sketchy. Still, some sections ought to have been expanded or omitted: for example, those on regionalism, comedy and tragedy (all in one chapter): and elsewhere some necessary distinctions are not made (e.g. the reference to *kitsch* is misleading and so is the lumping of Mickey Spillane with horror comics). But on the themes and within the limits I've outlined above this is a convincing performance. I am not a philosopher, but the treatment of moral issues seems to me sensitive and relevant. Parenthetically, Father Lynch believes, like a good American, in the ordinary man; and argues for his belief like a good Catholic. His critical judgments are usually well based (see his valuable distinction between "virtue" and "virtuosity" in popular entertainment). In all this he points at the two major issues in discussion about mass entertainments: the artistic and the moral (and he sees their essential unity). Within this chosen compass his book makes some remarkably shrewd and pointed observations which could help us all, as he firmly says he hopes they will, to do rather better on the subject—theologians to think more pertinently and critics to give up their elegant fence-sitting.

Voice of the Exiles

RADIO FREE EUROPE. By ROBERT T. HOLT. University of Minnesota Press. 249 pp. $5.00.

Reviewed by PAUL WILLEN

THE week of Vice President Nixon's visit to Moscow last July coincided with the official U. S. declaration of "Captive Nations Week"—neatly illustrating a central paradox in our foreign policy. On the one hand, the United States recognizes the need for continuing negotiation with the Soviet power; on the other hand, it is basically unwilling to reconcile itself to one of the major sources of Soviet authority, the postwar conquest of Eastern Europe. This policy of "non-reconciliation" (as distinct from non-recognition) takes several forms, perhaps the most significant of which is the organization known as Radio Free Europe, through which anti-Communist exiles of Eastern Europe have been broadcasting to their peoples during the last decade, and which is linked in the public mind with the goal of "liberation" of the Soviet satellites.

Since Radio Free Europe is technically a private organization, it has never been submitted to the same type of public scrutiny as its official governmental counterpart, the Voice of America. But now a young scholar from Minnesota, Robert T. Holt, has examined it at length, presumably on his own initiative, and the result is a well-documented study which despite its apologetic tone provides a good basis for a review of RFE's role in our East European policy.

The apologetic character is largely the result of Holt's analysis of the internal political mechanism of RFE, which is on the level of a high school civics class, obscuring the whole complex of *de facto* relationships by a pedantic examination of the *de jure* ones. The elaborate hierarchal system of committees, by which (in theory) the best professional judgment is gradually transmuted into high-level policy, may well deserve the attention which Holt gives it; but to treat this mechanism as if it were the substance of policy determination is

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to ignore the relative weakness of professional judgment when it opposes the political forces of our community—exile lobbies, minority pressure groups, governmental jurisdictional jealousies, etc., etc. Although these forces are not represented in RFE's neat table of organization, they have, on many occasions, been strong enough to circumvent it entirely.

Holt summarizes RFE's relationship to Washington in these words: "A number of RFE officials have personal friends in the State Department . . . whom they can contact if necessary." And further: "Obviously any financial relationships that might exist between Washington and RFE cannot be discussed in this volume." Such circumlocutions are in part deliberate; but they also reflect a naivety of approach. Nevertheless, Holt makes several points which deserve attention, mostly in the course of rebutting certain popular misconceptions. He effectively challenges, for example, the oft-heard charge that the RFE exile staffs are composed primarily of old-time East European reactionaries. He shows that a wide range of political groups, including many socialists, have been represented—although many leading positions have been held, especially among the Hungarians, by the more conservative politicians.

RFE has also been criticized for having broadcast, on the basis of flimsy reports, "black lists" of Communist informers marked for popular vengeance. This charge is not without foundation: but these "black lists" have sometimes hit the mark, notably in the case of the turncoat Polish security officer, Joseph Swiatlo. After his revelations in 1955, the Polish regime revamped its entire security apparatus, dismissing each one of the offenders named by Swiatlo.

Probably the most serious charge is that RFE has "incited" East Europeans to open revolt, with promises of Western military intervention. This, too, is far from the truth. Hints of possible Western intervention have been made, continually; but the idea of popular revolt has been alien to the minds of most exiles. Their focus of attention was not on the initiative of East European peoples, but rather on the diplomacy of the great powers in whose exclusive care they thought the destiny of their countries rested. Vividly recalling their own weakness in the face of Communist strength, they were as surprised as most people in the West by the great popular initiatives in

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1953-56. When revolution did come, they greeted it enthusiastically, but the RFE exiles played a negligible role in fomenting revolution, a word which always frightened them.

RFE's position has been an awkward one from its inception in 1949. Unlike the Voice of America, which clearly expresses official U. S. government policy, RFE's national "desks" were supposed to give voice to the suppressed opinions of the "captive" peoples—in a manner consistent, but not necessarily identical, with official Washington views. Holt defines this ambiguity as follows: "Radio Free Europe is not an American *voice*, but it is an American management of five European exile voices."

The inherent contradiction in this formula grew increasingly plain as events developed. In 1949, the exile community did in fact represent prevailing native opinion (as it had been expressed in more or less free elections in the preceding four years). Therefore the exile Czechs, for example, many of whom had served in the Benes government until the coup of February 1948, could speak honestly as the "Voice of Free Czechoslovakia." In time, however, as exile and homeland experience increasingly diverged, the authenticity of the exiles as "representatives" of their respective peoples grew increasingly dubious. Whereas the exiles remembered Communism primarily as mere brute violence, American specialists were beginning to see in it a complex system of social controls entailing fundamental economic transformations and relying only partly on force.

The events of the post-Stalin years gave a tremendous impetus to this conception of Communist society. The upheavals, reforms, and inner struggles of those years clearly indicated that the Communist system is not a static monolith, but is subject to change and evolution under the pressure of events. Today this may seem a commonplace; but in 1953 it was rejected by most important political scientists in the United States. For forty years Communism had been advancing steadily; there seemed no reason to hope that this advance could be checked by anything but military force.

In the Communist countries, however, the doctrine of Communist invincibility had already been partly shattered; and forces of popular opposition were driving ahead—not merely in open revolt as in East Berlin, Vorkuta, and Pilsen, but in the day-to-day struggle in factories and collective farms for better wages, less police surveillance, fewer administrative restrictions, an end to compulsory farm deliveries, and so forth. This battle was not fought in terms of the abstractions of "democracy" vs. "Communism," but in the concrete terms of daily life.

In the early months of 1954 these basic political insights were developed, with lengthy documentation, in a series of policy papers at Radio Free Europe. Contrary to Holt's version, their initial reception was far from warm; indeed, only by dint of the most strenuous efforts did these papers receive a hearing. They proposed, after all, that RFE encourage evolutionary change within the framework of the Communist system, with an eye to its peaceful, step-by-step modification. In practice, this meant a sharp realignment of propaganda themes—from long-range goals ("the end of the Communist tyranny") to short-term possibilities (*the dissolution of many collective farms*), from abstract ideological warfare ("the bankruptcy of Marxism") to concrete political plans (e.g., worker participation in the freer shop-committee elections in Czechoslovakia). In place of the ceaseless polemics against Communism, the papers urged a careful, well-studied effort to give voice and coherence to the actual daily struggle which the East European peoples, including many Communists, were waging against the Stalinist heritage. For this purpose a series of "provisional demands"—ten for Czechoslovakia, twelve for Hungary—were drawn up, specific, concrete, attainable under the Communist order.

Holt's account of the genesis and development of this new strategy is accurate as far as it goes. He neglects to describe, unfortunately, the bitter debates which accompanied the reluctant acceptance of these new policies, and the almost complete failure of RFE personnel to implement them between their adoption in 1954 and the Polish and Hungarian upheavals. The "demands" themselves were indeed frequently repeated, but they were phrased as threats, surrounded by harsh polemic, braced by general condemnations of the entire Communist system, and negated by minatory statistics on growing Western military strength. The realistic assumptions of gradual improvement, thus, took second place to the pre-1953 vision of some future apocalyptic transformation. The atmosphere remained that of warfare, rather than politics.

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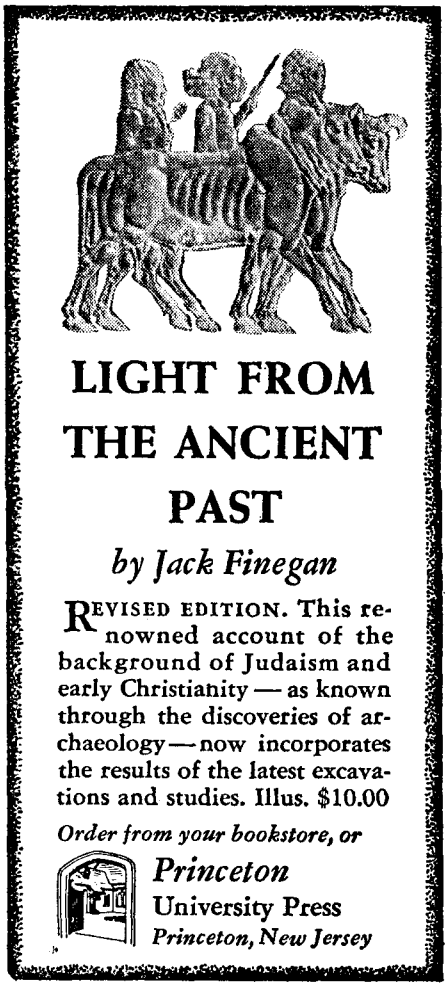
For the vast majority at RFE—including much of the American "management"—the new conceptions simply smacked of compromise, indeed of "Titoism," a term which was at that time anathema to almost all the exiles. Furthermore, the "evolutionary" strategy seemed to cut the exiles out, placing the major responsibility for "liberation" on the peoples at home, who would win their own victories and raise their own leaders. Worst of all, the genuine adoption of the "demands" meant facing a fact the exiles sought, at all costs, to avoid: that the 1952 Republican pledge of satellite "liberation" was empty campaign oratory. The "managing" American personnel frequently supported the exiles in their last-ditch struggles for the status quo; and these Americans in turn were supported by powerful groups inside and outside the U. S. government.

Our technical triumph in overcoming Communist jamming cannot obscure the failure of our political imagination in the face of the extraordinary opportunities of the last four years. In the summer of 1955, when the first signs of change were detected in Poland, the entire resources of the Polish emigration were assembled to prove the naivety of such hopes for Poland; only a year later, Gomulka assumed power. At the last minute, the Polish exiles, taking their cue from Cardinal Wyszynski, wheeled about and threw their weight behind Gomulka. Holt quotes several Communists who privately conceded that RFE's restraint during the October days contributed to the peaceful outcome of the crisis.

When the revolt spread to Hungary, however, the Hungarian RFE exiles gave in to the most primitive instincts of hatred and revenge, abandoning even the pretense of adherence to the concept of "evolutionary change" about which so much had been said since 1954. One should not overestimate RFE's influence on Hungarian events; but the role it played in undermining Imre Nagy during the last crucial days of October 1956 cannot be discounted. Today Nagy is everyone's hero—the great martyr of Hungarian freedom. All through 1956, however, he was a controversial figure, remembered in Hungary herself for his 1953-54 reforms, but treated with considerable suspicion abroad by exiles who refused even to recognize the existence of the compromise solution he represented. One may doubt, to be sure, whether Nagy could have sufficiently stabilized the Hungarian revolution to have forestalled Soviet intervention; and yet this was the only chance the revolution ever had. RFE's opposition to Nagy, in that decisive last week of October, surely contributed to the unrestrained expression of popular hatred which destroyed the last possibilities of compromise with Soviet power. The opposition to Nagy represented more than short-sightedness; it embodied, rather, the widespread exile opposition—shared by many Americans—to the very concepts of "evolutionary change."

When the final balance sheet is drawn up, one may question whether RFE has proven itself a flexible enough instrument to meet the delicate problems which arise in an area of such ambiguous commitments and possibilities as Eastern Europe. The need for special institutions, with governmental support, to conduct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a policy of "non-reconciliation" has not abated. But these institutions must have a considerably broader scope than it was possible to conceive of ten years ago in the initial phases of the cold war—a scope broad enough to encompass the preservation of the indigenous East European culture, and at the same time to encourage those trends inside Communist society which offer some hope of a democratic-directed evolution.

From Confucianism to Communism

CONFUCIAN CHINA AND ITS MODERN FATE: THE PROBLEM OF INTELLECTUAL CONTINUITY. By JOSEPH R. LEVENSON. University of California Press. 223 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by H. STUART HUGHES

IT IS most unusual in these days to encounter a book written by a specialist and primarily for specialists, yet which has at the same time so large a theme and so wide-ranging a grasp of comparative values as to be of nearly equal interest to the amateur. Professor Levenson's book on Confucianism in modern China falls in this rare category—and it is unashamedly as an outsider, deeply concerned with the history of ideas but without special competence in Far Eastern studies, that I am reviewing it.

For all its brevity and the strict analytic manner of its presentation, Professor Levenson's book deals with one of the great central issues of our time—how "the Confucian tradition, transformed and abandoned, has led directly to the Communist version of Chinese change of mind, not by preserving itself immanent in Communist doctrine, but by failing in self-preservation, leaving its heirs bereft and potentially strange in their own land, and thus commending that latest doctrine as an answer to a need." It traces the twisting, involuted story of the inability of a purely literary and artistic culture to adjust to the contemporary world—each successive accommodation proving itself inadequate until finally only Communism is left. It is thus an account of the "modern fate" not only of the Confucian ideal underlying traditional Chinese society, but of the class that considered itself the incarnation of that ideal, the literati-bureaucrats, amateurs alike in administration and with the paintbrush, who saw no incompatibility between their lofty role as governors and their still higher function as gentlemen-scholars disdainful of the practical arts.

This brief sketch should be enough to suggest that Professor Levenson's consideration of ideas is firmly anchored in social analysis. "If . . . one interprets intellectual history as a history not 'of thought,' but of men thinking, one will not see a bloodless Confucianism . . . [and] . . . a similarly abstract Communism, but Confucian generations giving way, living, feeling, and easing the strains." This notion of successive generations, each with its particular intellectual problems, is one of the two great strengths of Professor Levenson's book: it gives concreteness and human actuality to material ordinarily treated as a linguistic or philosophical exercise. The second notable feature is more subtle—a range of comparative reference and of sensitivity to non-Chinese cultural concerns that constantly opens vistas of understanding to those unlearned in Far Eastern matters.

Just as Professor Levenson's sociological buttressing of his intellectual analysis gives the outsider some notion of what he is talking about in the more recondite sections of his book, so his comparative references enable us to situate Confucian thought within our own reach. When he cites a philosopher like Whitehead or a whole series of contemporary Western aestheticians, we begin to feel ourselves on firm ground. The same is true of his treatment of Chinese painting. Originally this latter may strike the reader as strained or inappropriately lugged in: its relevance may only gradually become apparent. As I see it, Professor Levenson is trying to suggest that Chinese classical literature and painting are complementary manifestations of the same tradition; we cannot fully understand the ideas without at the same time paying attention to their plastic embodiment. And this comparative concern for painting has an inestimable advantage for the non-specialist. A reader (like myself) for whom the Chinese classics are unknown and impenetrable has at least some notion of the values implicit in Chinese art and decoration.

Thus I think Professor Levenson has triumphantly solved his peculiarly difficult problems of method and presentation. I could cavil at a few matters of detail: the form of loosely joined essays that he has adopted makes for both gaps and overlappings in the chronological sequence, and presupposes a detailed knowledge of Chinese history that can be true

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of only a minority of his readers. But this question pales to insignificance before the really central issue—has he "proved" his point about the logical succession of Communism to Confucianism as the dominant value-system within Chinese society?

FROM chapter to chapter this theme—which is only glancingly suggested at the start—becomes ever more explicit and insistent. First we have the comparison between the European "invaders" of the 17th century, when Chinese society was still stable, the Jesuit fathers who "gave their actions a Chinese cast and tried . . . to accommodate their own ideas to Chinese civilization," and the 19th-century diplomats, traders, and military men, who no longer dreamed of such accommodation. This time it was the Chinese rather than the Europeans who had to make the adjustments. And hence Professor Levenson's second task is to trace the record of these successive concessions. Each in turn, he finds, proved pitiably inadequate. From the eclecticism of those who tried to merge the conflicting Confucian schools into one solid mass of resistance, through the compromisers who preached the synthesis of Chinese "essence" with Western "utility," to the reformers who looked to a Chinese "Luther" to modernize the Confucian tradition—all failed to appreciate the radical incompatibility between the two competing value systems. And the same was true of the nationalist founders of the 20th-century Chinese republic: to make of China a nation like any other was to destroy the central Confucian understanding of civil society—it meant reducing China from a world in itself to a mere "unit in the world." Hence the nationalist faith of men like Chiang Kai-shek could not offer a "final resting place" but rather "a doctrine with increasingly obvious internal tensions" whose "relativism" and "Romanticism" provided no unequivocal guide either to the past or to the future.

And so Professor Levenson leads us to the reception of Communism by the Chinese intelligentsia. Communism, he finds, alone provided a satisfactory escape from the dilemma with which the educated Chinese had been struggling for nearly a century: "The very Western origin of the Communist call to revolt, instead of putting a psychological hurdle in the way of Chinese acceptance, smoothed the path, for it guaranteed that the pre-Communist West, the West which had impinged on China, was as firmly rejected by its own critics as by the most hidebound Chinese traditionalist. A Chinese who wishes to be confident, then, of the equivalence of China and the West need not fall back on a desperate traditionalism, since anti-traditionalism, under Communist aegis, would serve his purpose. Instead of being the laggard, following in Western footsteps, a Communist China, with Russia, could seem at the head of the queue."

This argument I, for one, find enormously

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persuasive. At points it may be too neat: it skirts close to a kind of historical determinism in its deft elimination of all competing solutions. But this is no more than the danger that confronts any satisfactory historical explanation. After all, the historian knows the outcome—he is dealing not only with hypothetical possibilities but with what in fact occurred, and the fact of that occurrence weights his whole account in one clear direction.

Hence implicit in Professor Levenson's analysis is the conviction that Communism has come to China to stay. This assumption—which for a number of years has characterized nearly all professionally competent writing on contemporary China—has only just begun to penetrate the wider strata of the American reading public. At a high intellectual level, books like Professor Levenson's cannot fail to further this process of gradual comprehension. One should note, however, a final and most important reservation. Unlike certain European scholars, Professor Levenson firmly rejects the notion that Communism is the lineal heir of the Confucian tradition. Again and again he argues that the great change in China has come as a radical break, not through traditionalist continuity. "The old saw about China's absorbing everything should be buried once and for all."

In this last respect, the relevance of Professor Levenson's book extends far beyond the sphere of Asian or Chinese concerns. The "problem of intellectual continuity" with which he is dealing has an application to Europe, to Latin America, and even to a country like our own, in which the last generation has experienced so revolutionary a change in cultural values. As an explanation of how a sharp break in a long-accepted tradition can come about, Professor Levenson's work offers a stinging challenge to those historians who view the past almost exclusively in terms of imperceptible transformations and stable continuities.

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COMMENTARY

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The Expatriate Twenties

THE WAY IT WAS. By HAROLD LOEB. Criterion. 310 pp. $5.95.

Reviewed by HENRY POPKIN

THIS sober, unintentionally funny record of a strange literary career might have been called "Portrait of the Artist as a Shlimazl." Its author, Harold Loeb, was a leading spirit in the expatriate literary activities of the 1920's. A pleasant, conscientious, well-meaning heir to a modest fortune, he decided one day to become a man of letters, mainly because he liked the company of writers. In return, writers liked having him pay their bills.

Loeb first supported an avant-garde bookstore in New York. He was stimulated by his more literary customers but appalled by his business associates, who cared little about selling books. So, he gave up the store and started an arty little magazine, *Broom,* which was printed in Europe for economy's sake. He hired a poet, Alfred Kreymborg, to help him. When his new associate insisted on a contract, Loeb wondered why; he may have found out later, when he paid the poet five hundred dollars to go away. A friend of Kreymborg's wife had been hired as a secretary; in ten days of Loeb's absence she did not type a single letter, and so was fired. Loeb felt his greatest disappointment when he found a letter to Kreymborg from the scenic designer Gordon Craig, who put Loeb in the inferior category of "work people" and told Kreymborg "how to manipulate" his wealthy backer.

Broom survived these trials, and Loeb continued to put up with delayed deliveries in America, embarrassing misprints (including an advertisement for "inferior decoration"), his family's skepticism, and various financial hazards. His American representative proved incompetent and was replaced by an efficient, invaluable woman—who promptly resigned when *Broom* published Gertrude Stein's work. One of his contributors, Gorham Munson, denounced Loeb by letter at a *Broom* meeting in New York, and later had a fist fight with Loeb's friend and fellow editor, Matthew Josephson. When Loeb submitted some of his fiction to *Broom,* Josephson wrote him that it was not up to the standard that they had set by publishing Dostoevsky and Appollinaire. Loeb comments, with unusual bitterness: "I

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did not know why Matty had failed to note that my work fell short of Melville and Proust."

At last, Loeb began to lose a little of his pleasure among the bohemians. Even in New York, he had been startled when his partner in the bookstore was suddenly deserted by her husband. In Paris, he found it difficult to maintain *sang froid* when a naked woman appeared at a costume ball. (He gallantly danced with her to cover her embarrassment.) Insults and financial loss were the price he paid for the company he preferred: "Despite their vanity, their humbleness, their compensatory egotism, their volatility, their meanness, and their ridiculous generosity, they were in my opinion the only people fit to associate with."

Dismayed by some of the dubious types who turned to literature, Loeb was delighted that so hearty and masculine a fellow as Ernest Hemingway had become a writer. He found a publisher for Hemingway's first book, only to learn that others were claiming to have performed this favor. Still, he and Hem were friends, and so he took his latest mistress, Duff, and another of her lovers to join Hemingway in Spain. Loeb was vaguely aware of some hanky panky between Duff and Hem, but he gained the ultimate reward of friendship when Hem immortalized Loeb and Duff as Robert Cohn and Lady Brett Ashley in *The Sun Also Rises.*

Loeb comes off a little better in his own book than in Hemingway's. An obvious romantic in both accounts, he is much less pugnacious and slightly more flexible than Robert Cohn, but it is easy to understand how his untiring patience must have gotten on Hemingway's nerves. Perhaps Hemingway made Cohn an expert boxer (which Loeb was not) in order to provide some outlet for Loeb's smoldering hostility. But this is the end of Loeb's literary odyssey; his mighty efforts earned him permanent fame as the original of the obnoxious young man who is told: "Take that sad Jewish face away."

From the first, Loeb had harbored profound suspicion of his arty friends. Describing his early, troubled loyalty to art, he tells us that he had "applauded Little Theatre productions even when it hurt." He felt that the iconoclasts "were more intolerant in their anti-traditionalism than their parents had been in their traditions," and he recognized his deep kinship with his parents, if not with their traditions. A strange bohemian indeed, he preserved close ties with his family in America. At one point, his cousin Edmond remarked that *Broom* was "a most interesting little endeavor" and requested some interpretation of a poem by a young man who had just married into the family. Loeb interpreted the poem, and Edmond, thoroughly satisfied, passed his analysis on to Uncle Simon. This "affectionate uncle" considered backing *Broom,* but withdrew. A few years later, however, Uncle Simon initiated the Guggenheim awards for promising young writers.

Editing *Broom* cost Loeb both personal and financial embarrassment; it made enemies and lost friends. Was it all worthwhile? He did have the satisfaction of putting out the handsomest and one of the best little magazines, which published early work by E. E. Cummings, Hart Crane, Marianne Moore, Wallace Stevens, and William Carlos Williams. All this would have been quite satisfying if Loeb had liked these writers, but apparently he never really did. His real enthusiasms are for such relatively conventional figures as James Stephens and Gilbert Cannan.

Furthermore, the most typical contributors to *Broom* were directly opposed to the one doctrine which Loeb himself preached—admiration for America's technology and popular arts. Loeb liked American factories, movies, and

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jazz. He shared his interest in the popular arts with Cummings and Gilbert Seldes, but, unlike them, he preferred to go into print on technology, arguing that the American worker was much better off than his European counterpart and that the expatriates' hostility to their native land was based on ignorance. Stephens and Cannan agreed with him, but few of his other literary friends did. *Broom,* devoted mainly to expatriate American writing and to European art, published little to support Loeb's position except his own occasional articles. Loeb suspected that Gordon Craig's thumb-to-nose cover drawing was aimed at him. Duff once phrased the obvious question: "Why do you sponsor one kind of thing and praise another?" She got an ineffective answer: "*Broom,* I explained, was a highbrow magazine that published individual expressions. But I had wanted our intellectuals to face the fact that many popular expressions were wonderful too in their way." It is far from surprising that Loeb returned to America—to become a leading economist, an able student of American business, and an interpreter of technocracy.

Broom was a superior little magazine, and Loeb deserves credit for sponsoring it. No other little magazine approached it in the field of elegant reproductions of new art. It was also strong on poetry, but Loeb expresses so little interest in verse that I suspect he took his advisers' counsel in selecting it. Much of its fiction was rather drab; most of the contributors of new fiction are now entirely forgotten. Fiction, perhaps significantly, was Loeb's specialty. He was more moved by the novelists Stephens and Cannan than by any other writers whom he names. He himself turned novelist, proclaiming: "Anyone can write a novel." (He later added: "I didn't mean anyone could write a *good* novel.")

We have grounds for believing that Loeb's best contribution was managerial rather than editorial. Defending his publication of Gertrude Stein, he suggests that he was not very happy as an editor: "Certainly most of Stein was 'blah!' Most of what was being written was not good, either." Then what kept *Broom* going all those years? A certain amount of taste backed by conviction; a certain amount of plain, iron stubbornness; and a great abundance of romanticism flying in the face of experience.

Book Reviewers in This Issue

Milton Himmelfarb, a frequent contributor, is director of the Library of Jewish Information at the American Jewish Committee.

Henry David Aiken is a member of the department of philosophy at Harvard University. This is his first appearance in Commentary.

Isa Kapp reviewed John Cheever's *The Housebreaker of Shady Hill* in our May number.

Richard Hoggart, a new contributor, is senior lecturer in English at Leicester University, England. He is the author of two books, *Auden* (1951) and *The Uses of Literacy* (1957).

Paul Willen, who formerly served with Radio Free Europe, reviewed several books on the Soviet Union in our February 1957 issue.

H. Stuart Hughes, professor of history at Harvard, most recently contributed "A Politics of Peace" (February 1959).

Henry Popkin, who reviewed five books on the entertainment business in our May issue, is now studying in France on a Fulbright grant.

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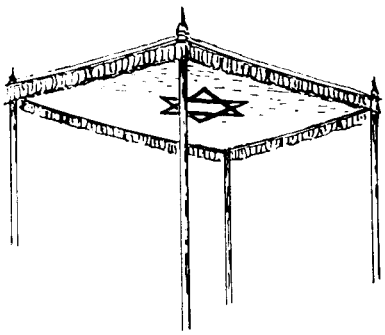

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omewhere in this mighty land of ours, a gifted youth learning to see the light of tomorrow. Somewhere, a college classroom or laboratory, a dedicated teach- is gently leading genius toward goals of lofty attain- ent. Somewhere the mind of a future discoverer—in ience, engineering, government, or the arts—is being ained to transcend the commonplace.

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